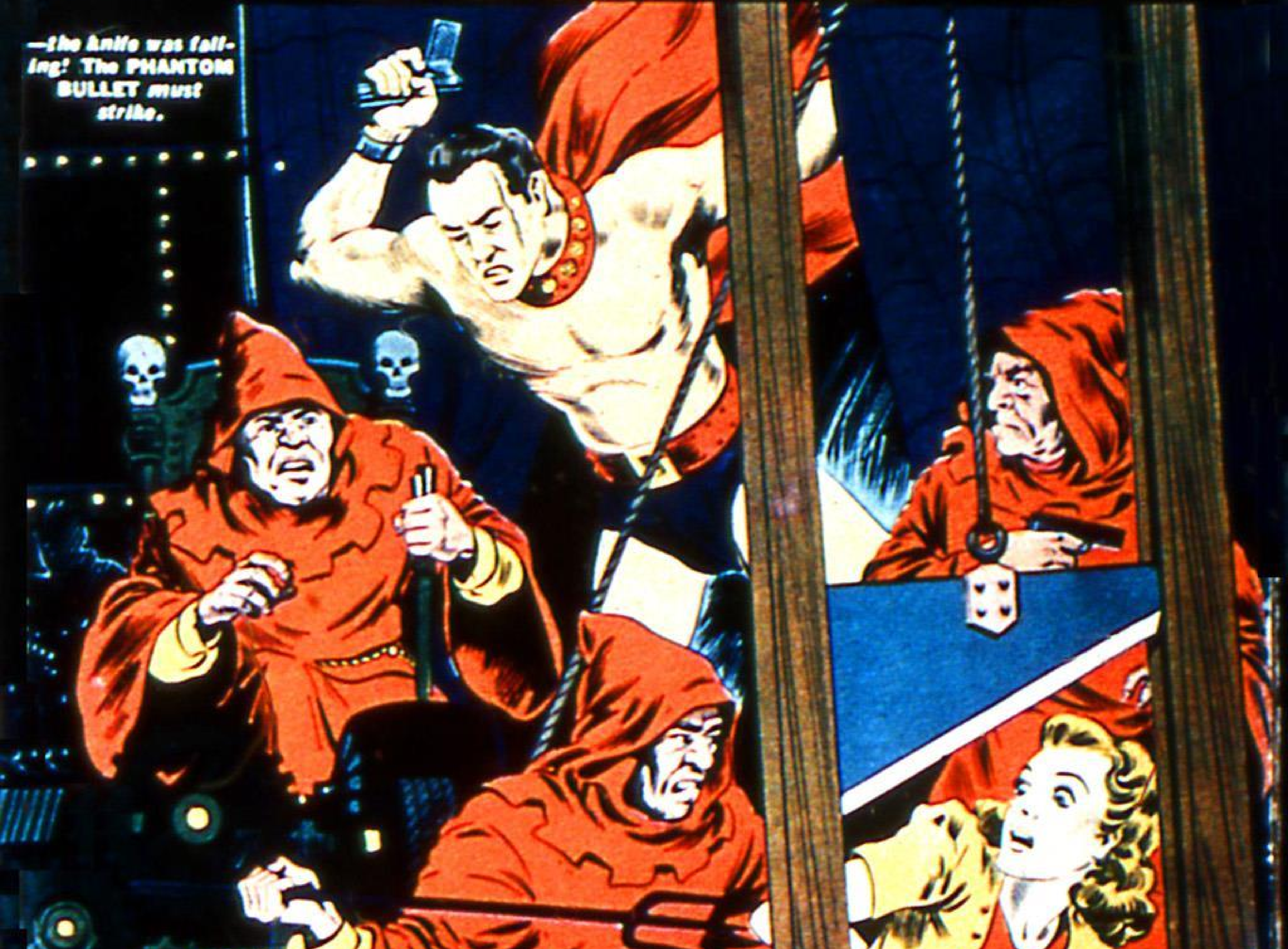
DARING MYSTERY COMICS

No. 2

10¢

FEB.

DETECTIVE
ADVENTURE
ACTION


—the knife was falling! The PHANTOM BULLET must strike.

ZEPHYR-JONES
Rocket Marvel

THE PHANTOM BULLET
Scourge of the Underworld

TROJAK
The Tiger Ma

DARING COMICS'

Starts
Right
Now!

FREE! $25.00 PRIZE CONTEST

You Can WIN
$5.00 FIRST PRIZE

Here's what you do—

Here's the latest copy of DARING COMICS. It's filled with thrilling features which have never appeared anywhere before! Look! ZEPHYR JONES—TROJAK, the TIGER MAN—MR. "E"—SIXGUN DYNAMITE—K4 and HIS SKY DEVILS—and THE PHANTOM BULLET!

All these features are exciting . . . that's why they are in DARING COMICS . . . the best features the Editor could find anywhere!

Among these features you must have a favorite character. Perhaps it's the Tiger-Man, "TROJAK" . . . maybe it's the story—"SIXGUN DYNAMITE," or the exciting and mysterious "Mr. 'E'" . . . or do you prefer "K4 and HIS SKY DEVILS"? Which is your favorite feature, and WHY?

20 Chances to WIN!

All Prizes Are CASH!

FIRST PRIZE	$5.00
SECOND PRIZE	$2.00
THIRD TO TWENTIETH PRIZE $1.00 Each	$18.00
TOTAL	$25.00

20 PRIZES IN ALL!

IT'S FUN—IT'S SIMPLE!

Write the Editor of DARING COMICS who your favorite character is, and WHY — in a hundred words or less, and if you write the best letter, he will pay you at the rate of FIVE CENTS A WORD!!! for your letter (if you write 100 words), or $5.00 in cash as the FIRST PRIZE.

The Editor will award nineteen more prizes for the next nineteen best letters on who is the favorite character, and WHY? The second best letter will receive $2.00 in cash, and the next eighteen prizes will be one dollar in cash each!

Remember the simple rules — it must be not more than 100 words long, and tell who is your favorite character, and WHY. Of course, if you have more than one favorite character, you may mention them too, provided you don't write more than 100 words altogether. If there is no favorite character in the whole line-up, then tell the Editor the kind of character you'd like to see in DARING COMICS, which isn't there now.

All letters to be considered by the judges, must be postmarked not later than January 30, 1940. The judges decision will be final, and no letters will be returned. Also, the answers become the property of DARING COMICS.

So get busy now — while you have these characters in mind, and write that letter.

WIN A PRIZE — Write YOUR Letter

ENTER NOW!—Here Are the Simple Rules:

1 Pick out your favorite character or characters from the cartoon strip features published in DARING COMICS.

2 Write the name of the character or characters down in a letter and then write not more than one hundred words to explain WHY you prefer the character or characters best.

3 Write your name and address on the bottom of the letter and on the envelope.

4 Mail it to The Editor, DARING COMICS, 330 West 42nd St., New York, N. Y., not later than January 30, 1940. That's all there is to it — and you may win the FIRST PRIZE! Hurry now to write YOUR letter about DARING COMICS characters!

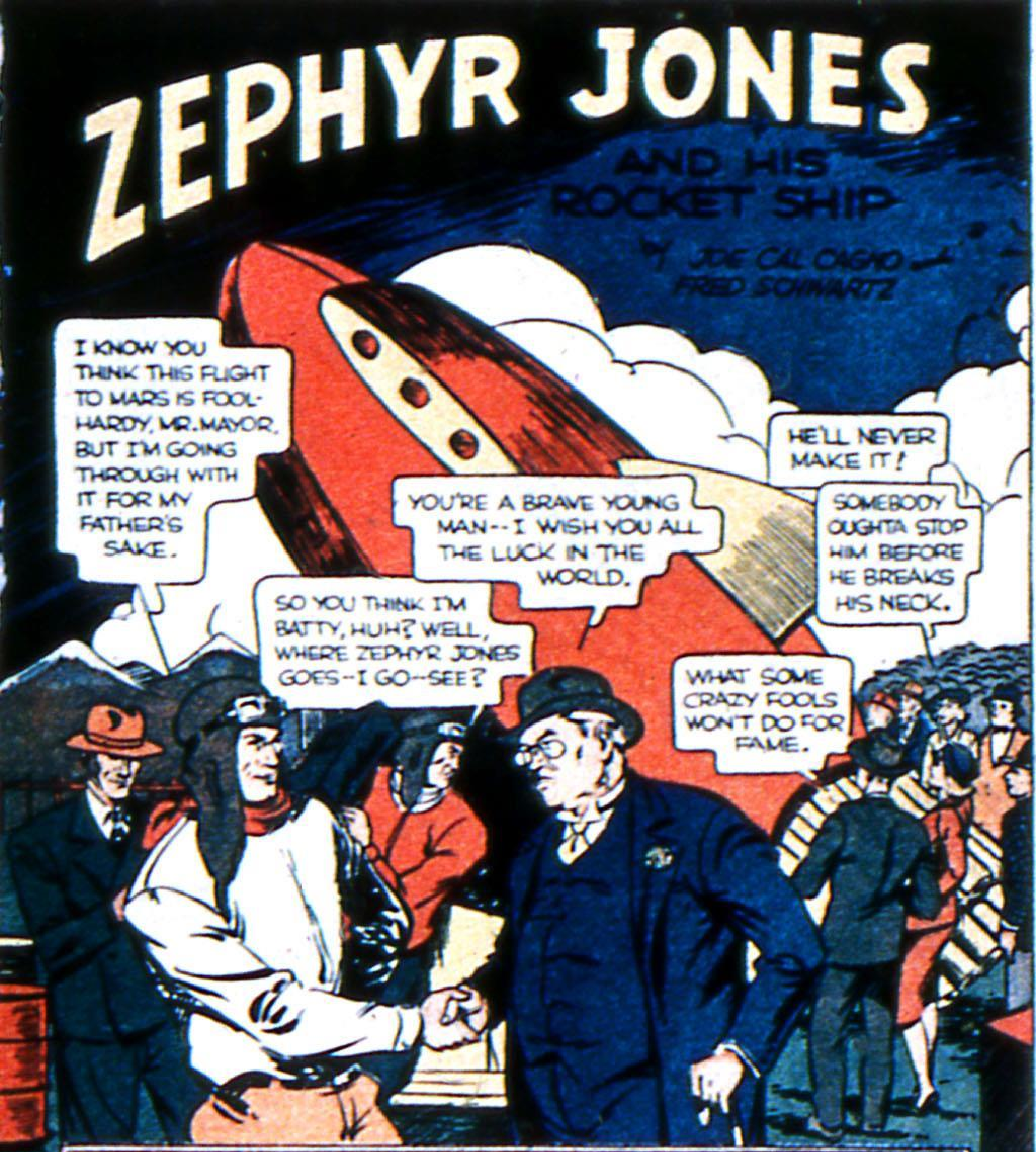
IT'S FUN — just 100 words, telling who you like best as your DARING COMICS character, and WHY. Write your name and address on the bottom of the letter and also on the envelope. Then mail it BEFORE January 30, 1940, to The Editor, DARING COMICS Magazine, 330 West 42nd Street, New York, N. Y. Results of the Contest will be announced as soon as possible after the deadline!

The Editor —

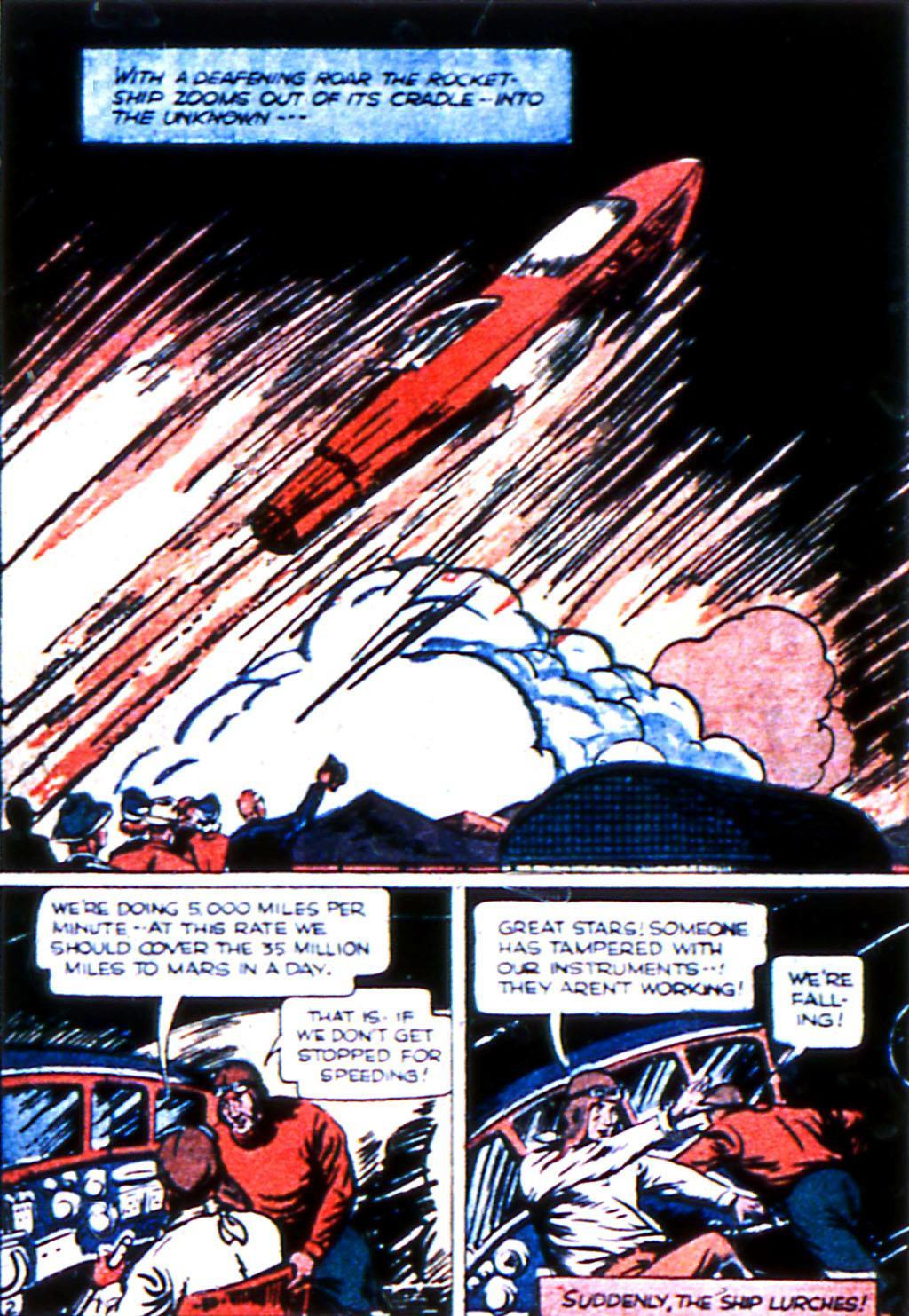
ZEPHYR JONES

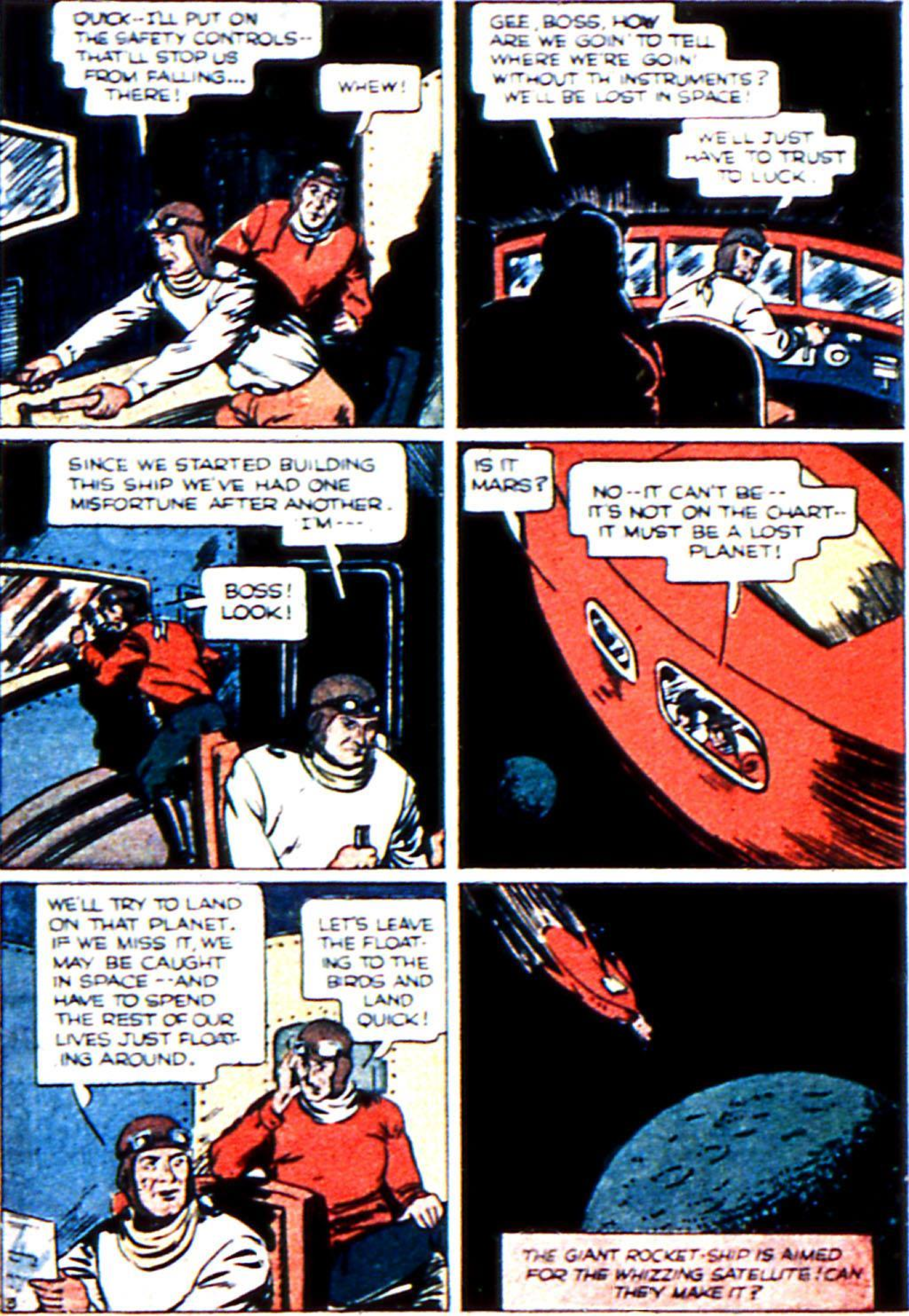
AND HIS ROCKET SHIP

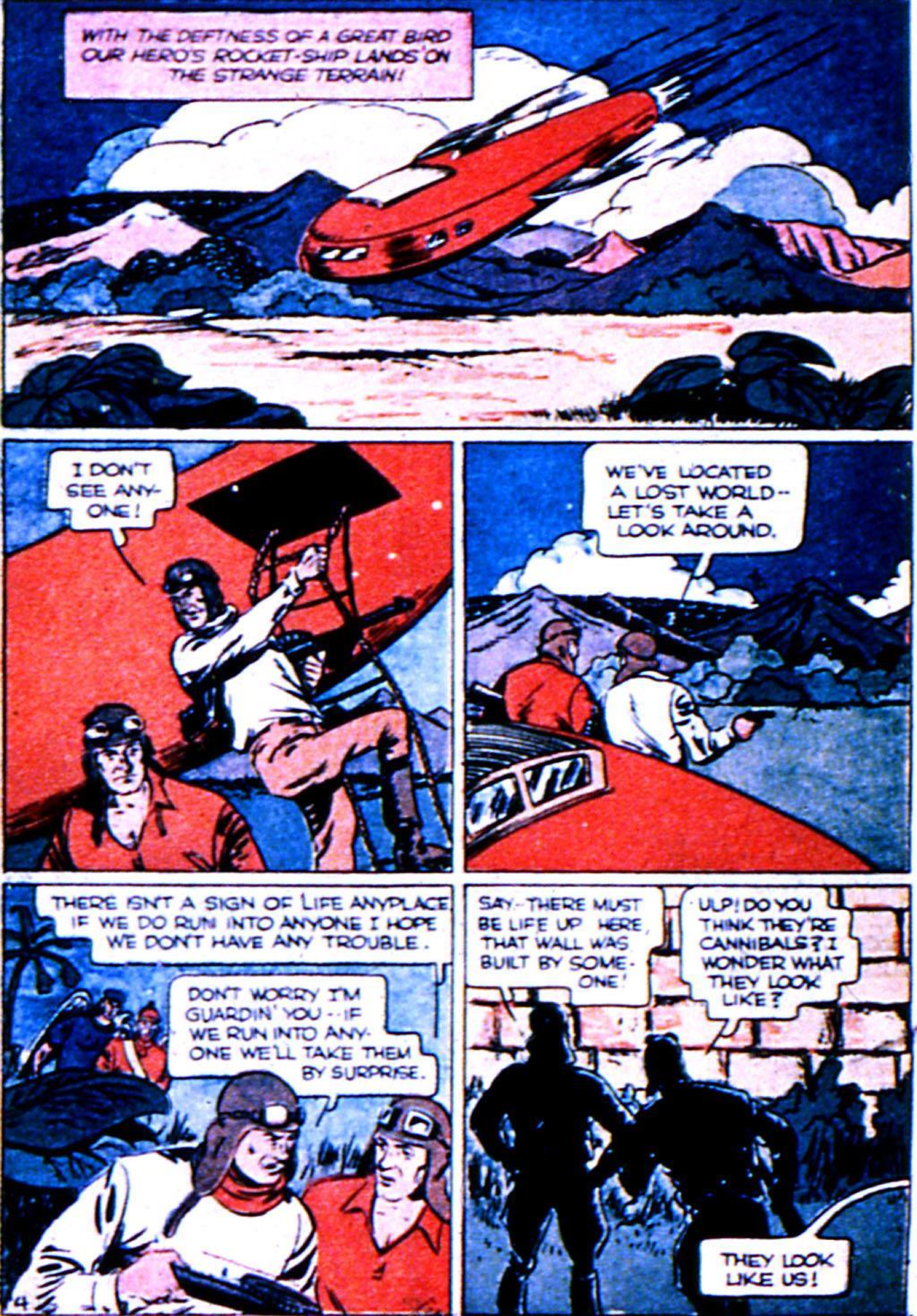
by JOE CALCAGNO — FRED SCHWARTZ

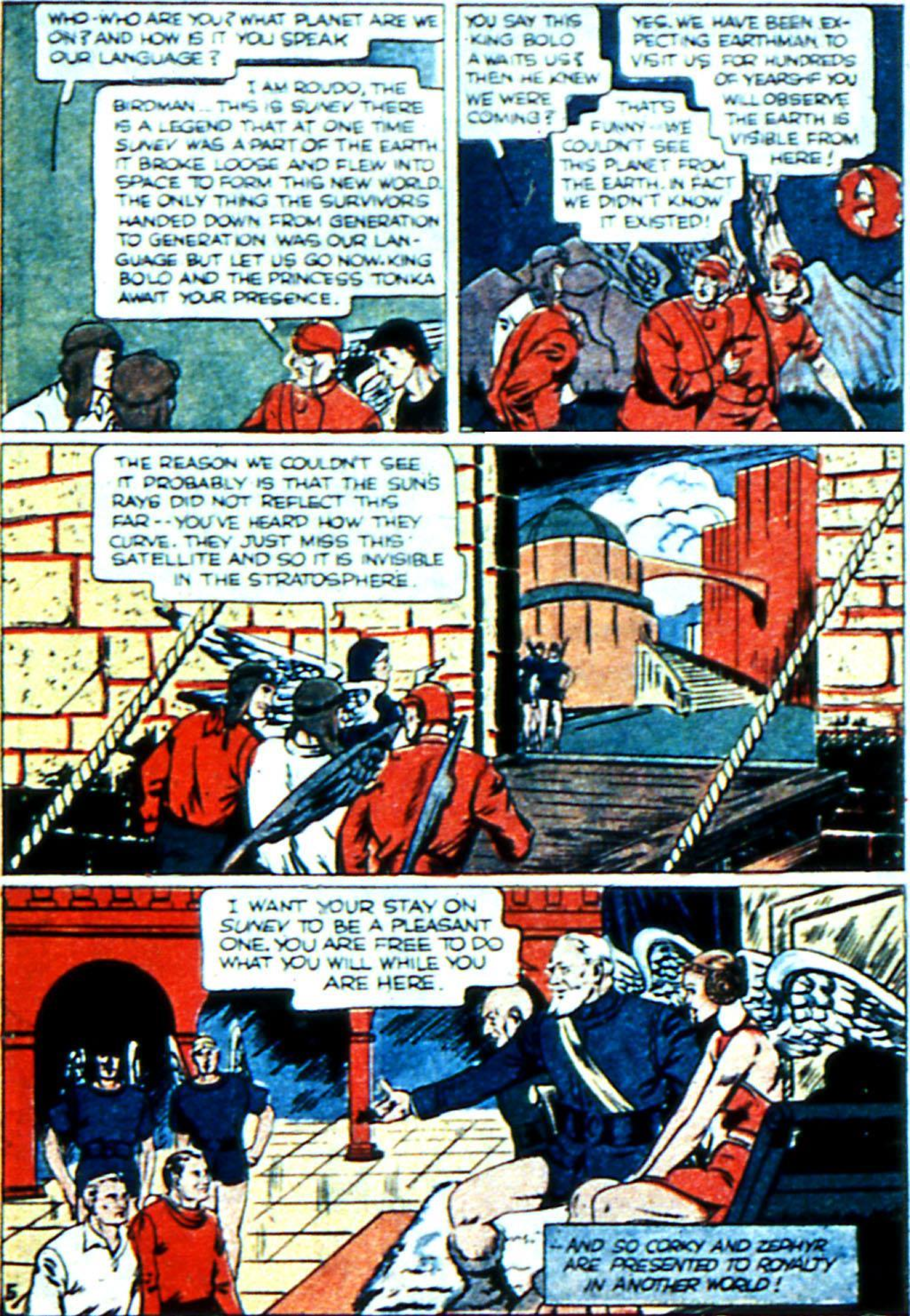

I KNOW YOU THINK THIS FLIGHT TO MARS IS FOOLHARDY, MR. MAYOR, BUT I'M GOING THROUGH WITH IT FOR MY FATHER'S SAKE.
YOU'RE A BRAVE YOUNG MAN--I WISH YOU ALL THE LUCK IN THE WORLD.
SO YOU THINK I'M BATTY, HUH? WELL, WHERE ZEPHYR JONES GOES--I GO--SEE?
HE'LL NEVER MAKE IT!
SOMEBODY OUGHTA STOP HIM BEFORE HE BREAKS HIS NECK.
WHAT SOME CRAZY FOOLS WON'T DO FOR FAME.

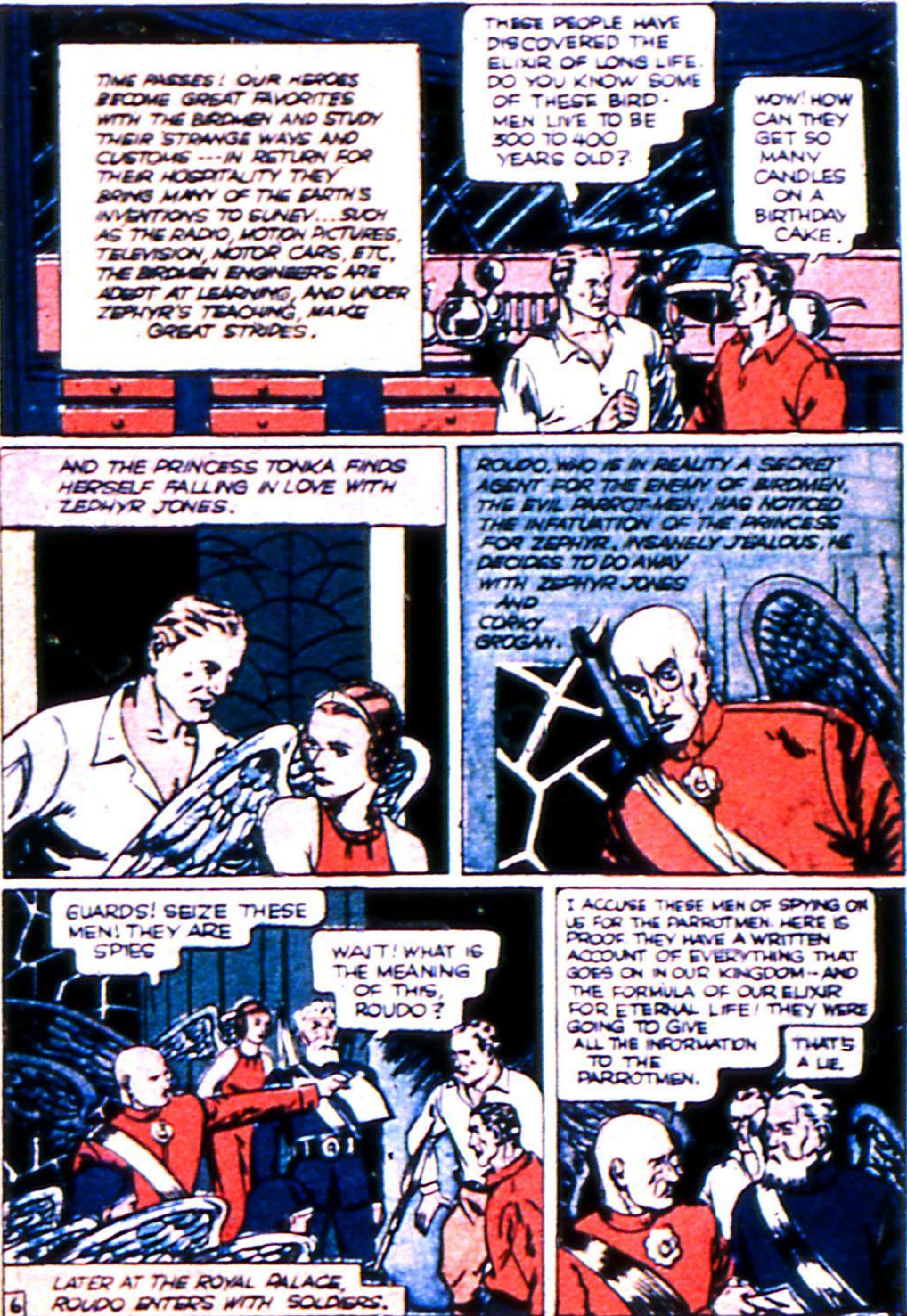
. . . ZEPHYR JONES, IS THE SON OF THE WELL-KNOWN SCIENTIST AND INVENTOR, DR. MORRISON JONES. ZEPHYR IS FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF HIS FAMOUS FATHER WHO STARTED BUILDING THE ROCKET-SHIP WITH WHICH HE PLANNED TO VISIT THE PLANET MARS. DR. JONES, UNFORTUNATELY, DID NOT LIVE TO SEE HIS SPACE SHIP COMPLETED AND HIS DREAM REALIZED. THROUGH MYSTERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES HE MET HIS UNTIMELY END, AND YOUNG ZEPHYR SWEARS THAT HE WOULD FULFILL HIS DAD'S WISHES AND UNDERTAKE THE FANTASTIC VOYAGE TO MARS. WITH HIS FAITHFUL FRIEND, CORKY GROGAN, HE IS READY TO START.

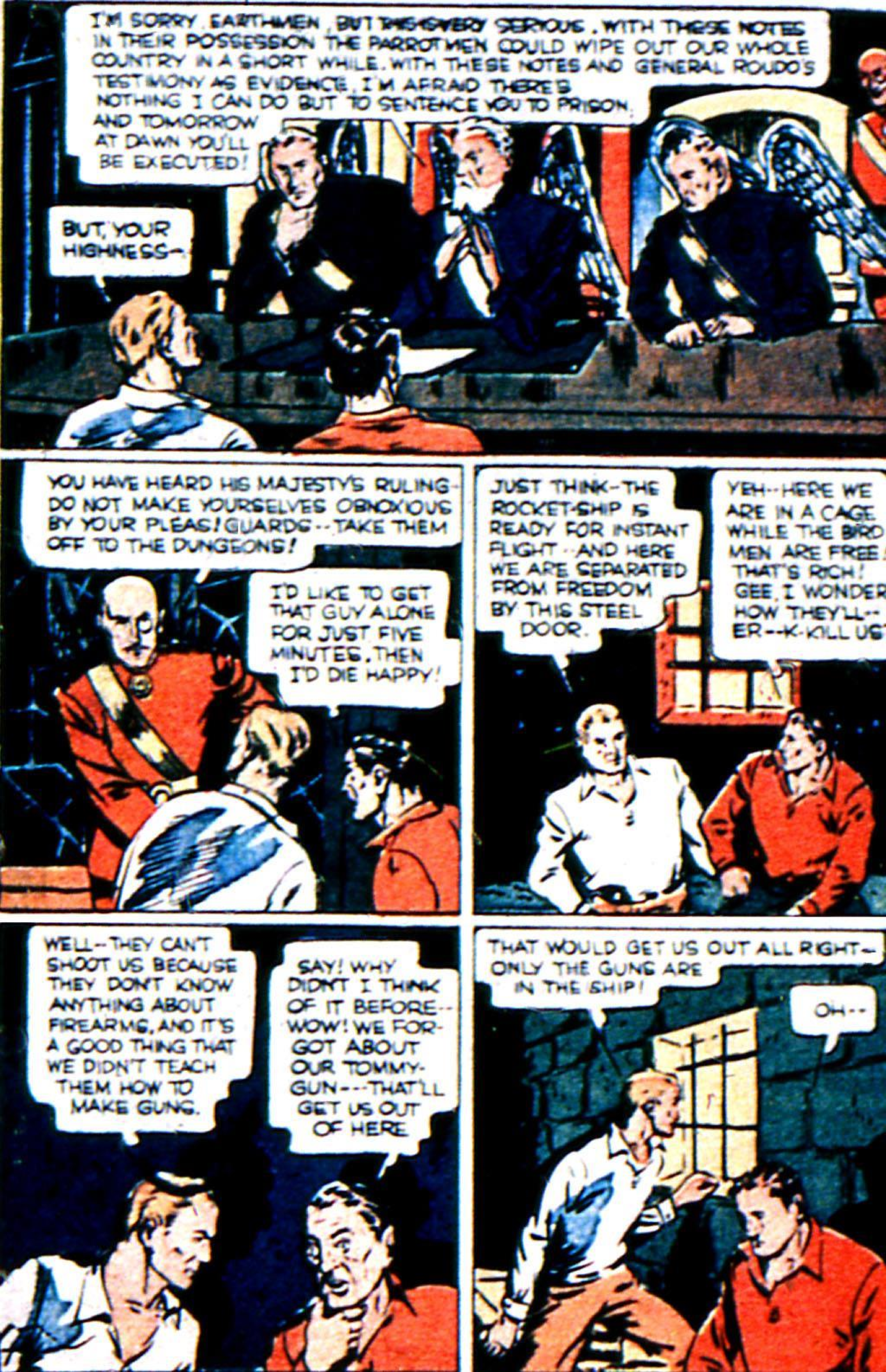

WITH A DEAFENING ROAR THE ROCKET-SHIP ZOOMS OUT OF ITS CRADLE--INTO THE UNKNOWN---
WE'RE DOING 5,000 MILES PER MINUTE--AT THIS RATE WE SHOULD COVER THE 35 MILLION MILES TO MARS IN A DAY.
THAT IS- IF WE DON'T GET STOPPED FOR SPEEDING!
GREAT STARS! SOMEONE HAS TAMPERED WITH OUR INSTRUMENTS--! THEY AREN'T WORKING!
WE'RE FALLING!
SUDDENLY, THE SHIP LURCHES!

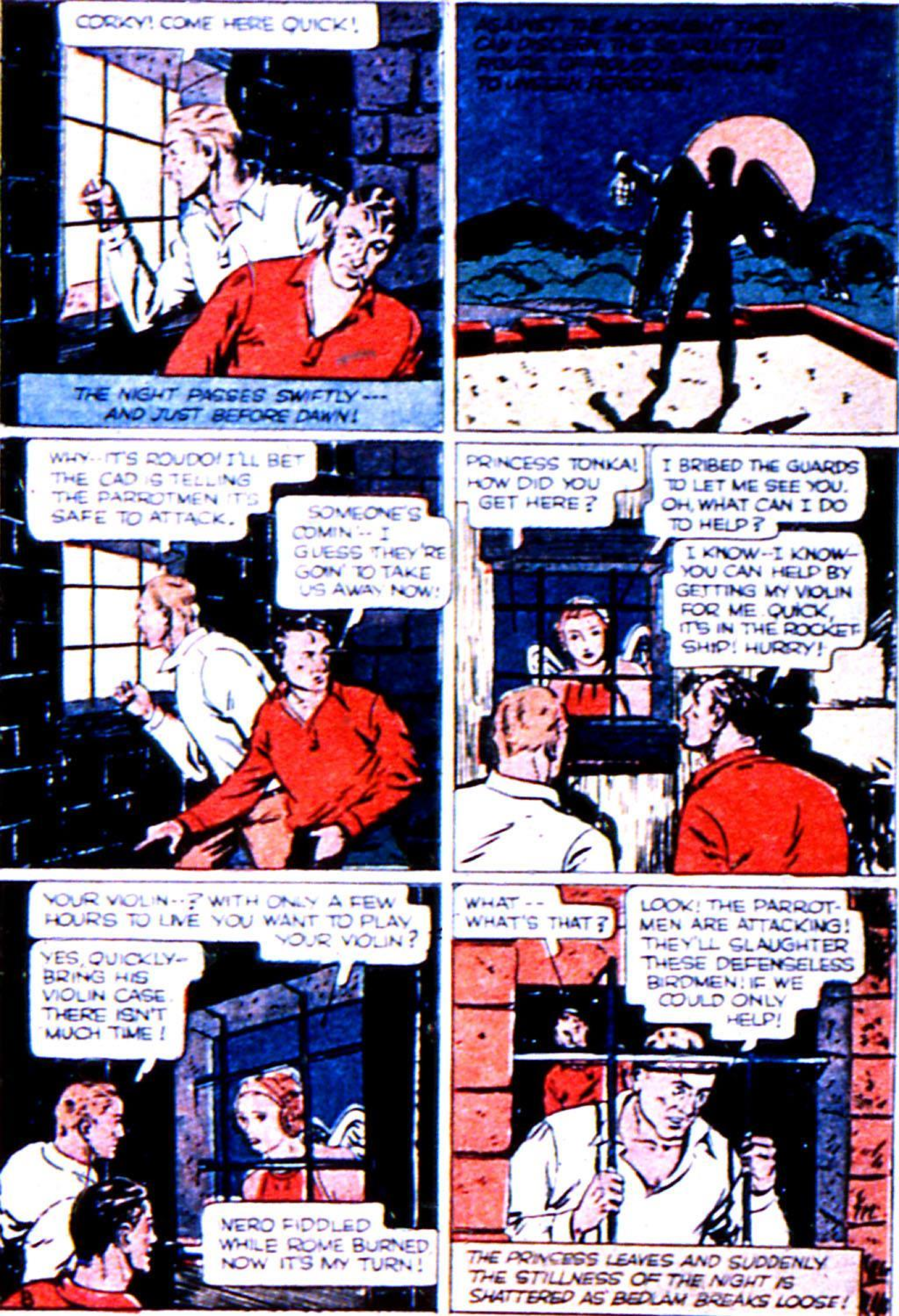

QUICK--I'LL PUT ON THE SAFETY CONTROLS--THAT'LL STOP US FROM FALLING... THERE!
WHEW!
GEE, BOSS, HOW ARE WE GOIN' TO TELL WHERE WE'RE GOIN' WITHOUT TH' INSTRUMENTS? WE'LL BE LOST IN SPACE!
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO TRUST TO LUCK.
SINCE WE STARTED BUILDING THIS SHIP WE'VE HAD ONE MISFORTUNE AFTER ANOTHER. I'M---
BOSS! LOOK!
IS IT MARS?
NO--IT CAN'T BE--IT'S NOT ON THE CHART--IT MUST BE A LOST PLANET!
WE'LL TRY TO LAND ON THAT PLANET. IF WE MISS IT, WE MAY BE CAUGHT IN SPACE--AND HAVE TO SPEND THE REST OF OUR LIVES JUST FLOATING AROUND.
LET'S LEAVE THE FLOATING TO THE BIRDS AND LAND QUICK!
THE GIANT ROCKET-SHIP IS AIMED FOR THE WHIZZING SATELLITE! CAN THEY MAKE IT?

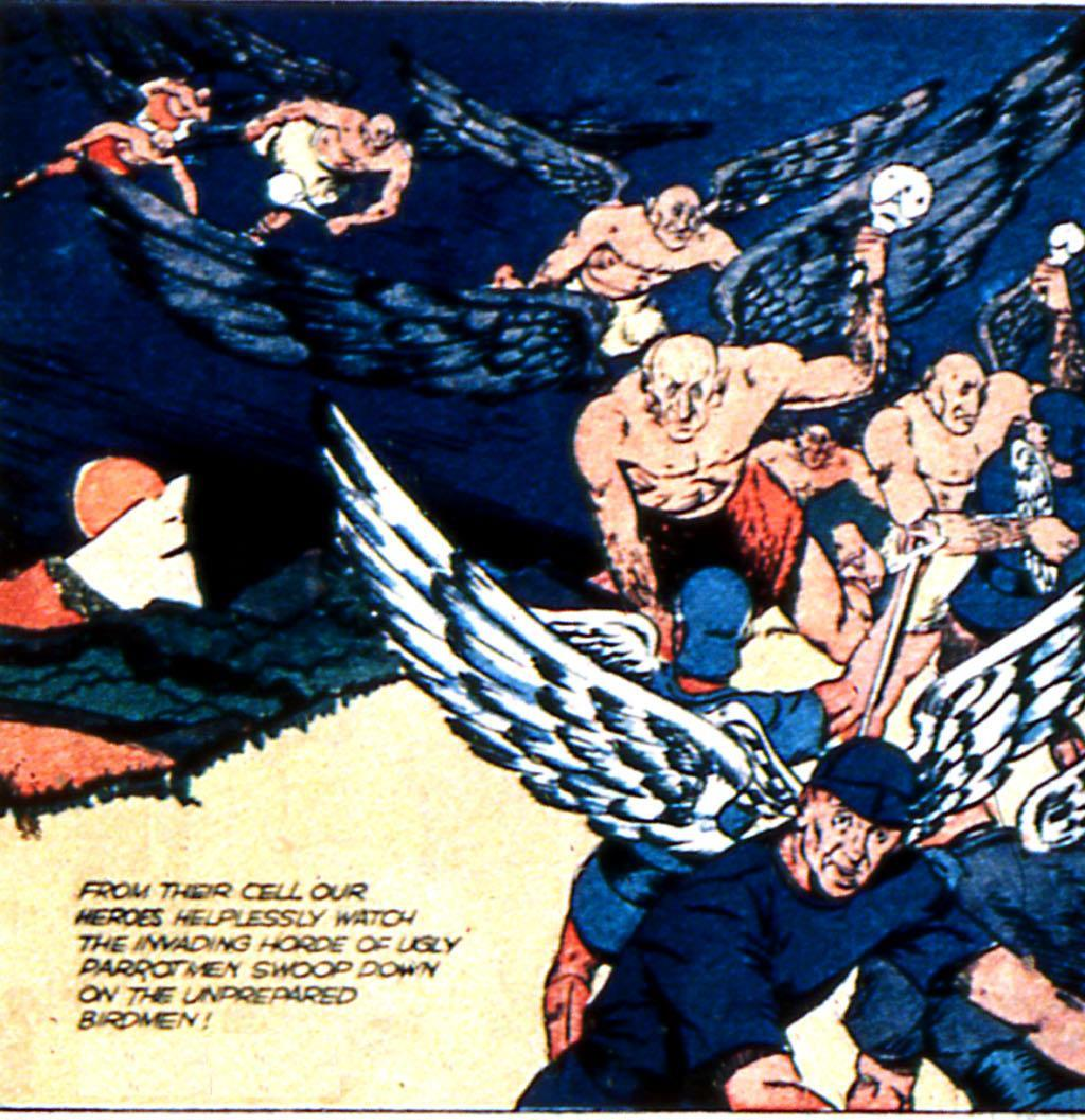

WITH THE DEFTNESS OF A GREAT BIRD OUR HERO'S ROCKET-SHIP LANDS ON THE STRANGE TERRAIN!
I DON'T SEE ANYONE!
WE'VE LOCATED A LOST WORLD-- LET'S TAKE A LOOK AROUND.
THERE ISN'T A SIGN OF LIFE ANYPLACE IF WE DO RUN INTO ANYONE I HOPE WE DON'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE.
DON'T WORRY I'M GUARDIN' YOU -- IF WE RUN INTO ANYONE WE'LL TAKE THEM BY SURPRISE.
SAY-- THERE MUST BE LIFE UP HERE, THAT WALL WAS BUILT BY SOMEONE!
ULP! DO YOU THINK THEY'RE CANNIBALS? I WONDER WHAT THEY LOOK LIKE?
THEY LOOK LIKE US!

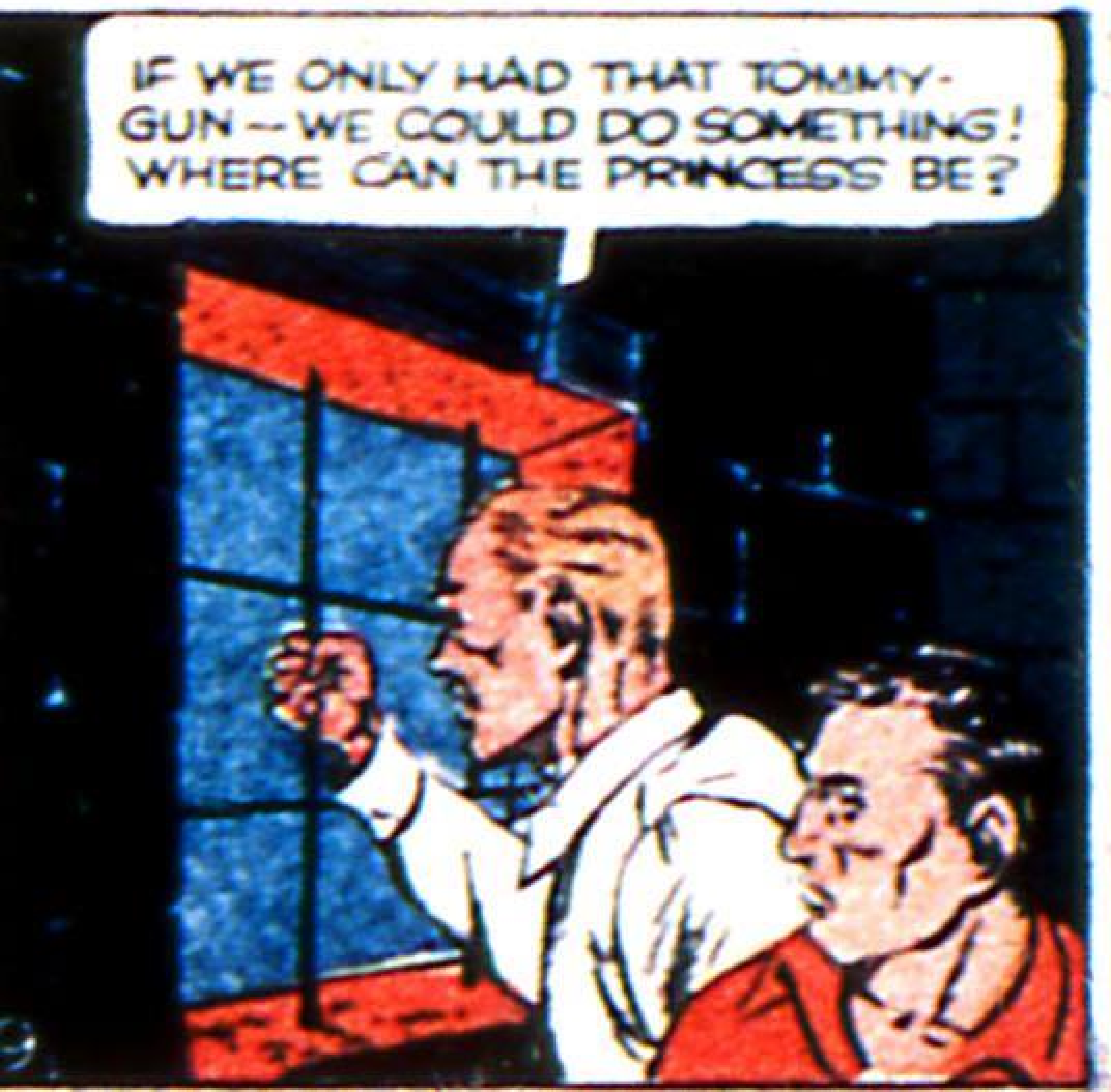

WHO-WHO ARE YOU? WHAT PLANET ARE WE ON? AND HOW IS IT YOU SPEAK OUR LANGUAGE?
I AM ROUDO, THE BIRDMAN... THIS IS *SUNEV* THERE IS A LEGEND THAT AT ONE TIME *SUNEV* WAS A PART OF THE EARTH. IT BROKE LOOSE AND FLEW INTO SPACE TO FORM THIS NEW WORLD. THE ONLY THING THE SURVIVORS HANDED DOWN FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION WAS OUR LANGUAGE BUT LET US GO NOW-KING BOLO AND THE PRINCESS TONKA AWAIT YOUR PRESENCE.
YOU SAY THIS KING BOLO AWAITS US? THEN HE KNEW WE WERE COMING?
YES. WE HAVE BEEN EXPECTING EARTHMAN TO VISIT US FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS-IF YOU WILL OBSERVE THE EARTH IS VISIBLE FROM HERE!
THAT'S FUNNY--WE COULDN'T SEE THIS PLANET FROM THE EARTH. IN FACT WE DIDN'T KNOW IT EXISTED!
THE REASON WE COULDN'T SEE IT PROBABLY IS THAT THE SUN'S RAYS DID NOT REFLECT THIS FAR--YOU'VE HEARD HOW THEY CURVE. THEY JUST MISS THIS SATELLITE AND SO IT IS INVISIBLE IN THE STRATOSPHERE.
I WANT YOUR STAY ON *SUNEV* TO BE A PLEASANT ONE. YOU ARE FREE TO DO WHAT YOU WILL WHILE YOU ARE HERE.
--AND SO CORKY AND ZEPHYR ARE PRESENTED TO ROYALTY IN ANOTHER WORLD!

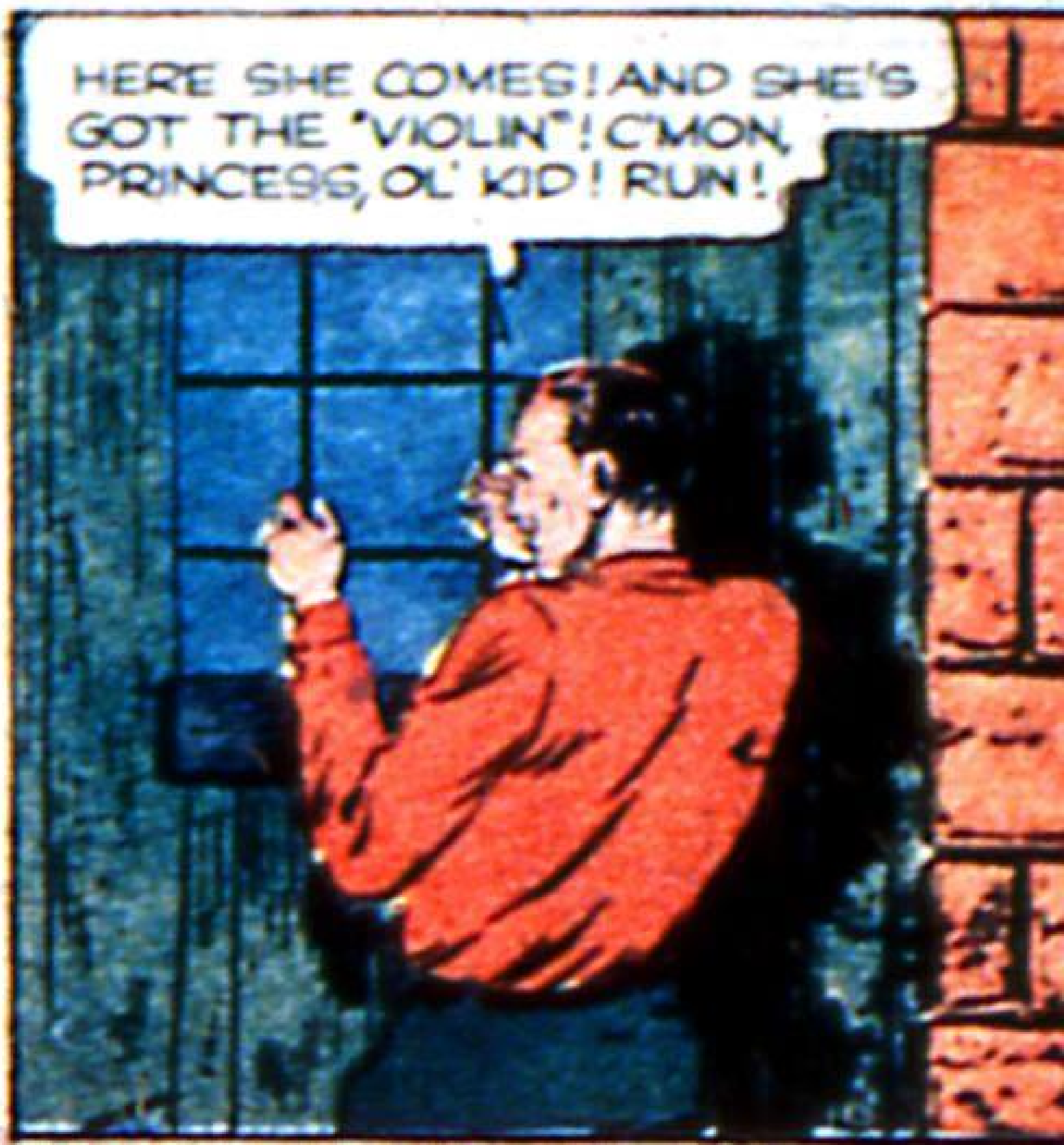

TIME PASSES! OUR HEROES BECOME GREAT FAVORITES WITH THE BIRDMEN AND STUDY THEIR STRANGE WAYS AND CUSTOMS---IN RETURN FOR THEIR HOSPITALITY THEY BRING MANY OF THE EARTH'S INVENTIONS TO SUNEV...SUCH AS THE RADIO, MOTION PICTURES, TELEVISION, MOTOR CARS, ETC. THE BIRDMEN ENGINEERS ARE ADEPT AT LEARNING, AND UNDER ZEPHYR'S TEACHING, MAKE GREAT STRIDES.
THESE PEOPLE HAVE DISCOVERED THE ELIXIR OF LONG LIFE. DO YOU KNOW SOME OF THESE BIRD-MEN LIVE TO BE 300 TO 400 YEARS OLD?
WOW! HOW CAN THEY GET SO MANY CANDLES ON A BIRTHDAY CAKE.
AND THE PRINCESS TONKA FINDS HERSELF FALLING IN LOVE WITH ZEPHYR JONES.
ROUDO, WHO IS IN REALITY A SECRET AGENT FOR THE ENEMY OF BIRDMEN, THE EVIL PARROT-MEN, HAS NOTICED THE INFATUATION OF THE PRINCESS FOR ZEPHYR. INSANELY JEALOUS, HE DECIDES TO DO AWAY WITH ZEPHYR JONES AND CORKY GROGAN.
GUARDS! SEIZE THESE MEN! THEY ARE SPIES
WAIT! WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS, ROUDO?
LATER AT THE ROYAL PALACE, ROUDO ENTERS WITH SOLDIERS.
I ACCUSE THESE MEN OF SPYING ON US FOR THE PARROTMEN. HERE IS PROOF. THEY HAVE A WRITTEN ACCOUNT OF EVERYTHING THAT GOES ON IN OUR KINGDOM--AND THE FORMULA OF OUR ELIXIR FOR ETERNAL LIFE! THEY WERE GOING TO GIVE ALL THE INFORMATION TO THE PARROTMEN.
THAT'S A LIE.

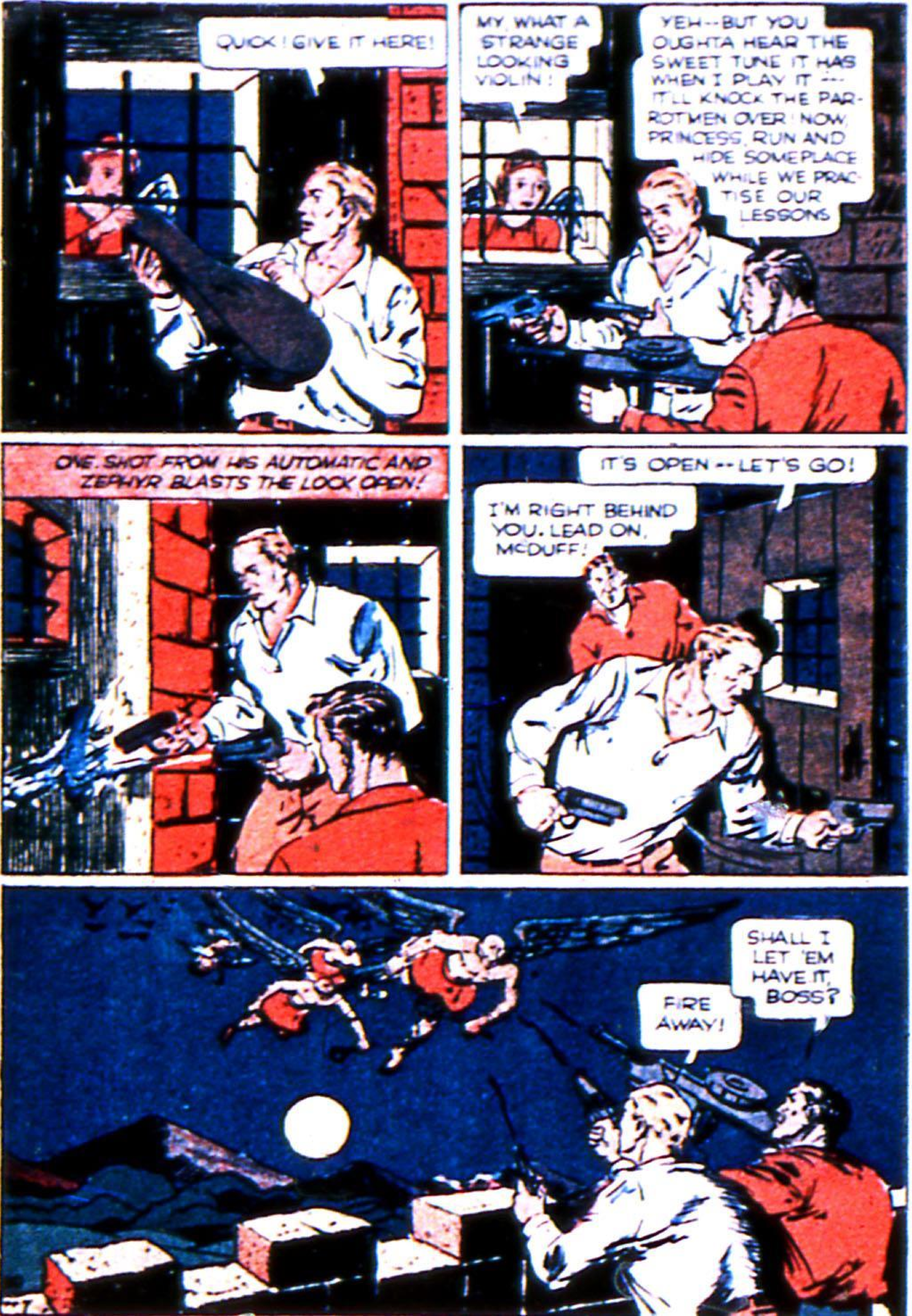

I'M SORRY, EARTHMEN, BUT THIS IS VERY SERIOUS. WITH THESE NOTES IN THEIR POSSESSION THE PARROTMEN COULD WIPE OUT OUR WHOLE COUNTRY IN A SHORT WHILE. WITH THESE NOTES AND GENERAL ROUDO'S TESTIMONY AS EVIDENCE, I'M AFRAID THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO BUT TO SENTENCE YOU TO PRISON, AND TOMORROW AT DAWN YOU'LL BE EXECUTED!
BUT, YOUR HIGHNESS--
YOU HAVE HEARD HIS MAJESTY'S RULING-- DO NOT MAKE YOURSELVES OBNOXIOUS BY YOUR PLEAS! GUARDS--TAKE THEM OFF TO THE DUNGEONS!
I'D LIKE TO GET THAT GUY ALONE FOR JUST FIVE MINUTES, THEN I'D DIE HAPPY!
JUST THINK--THE ROCKET-SHIP IS READY FOR INSTANT FLIGHT--AND HERE WE ARE SEPARATED FROM FREEDOM BY THIS STEEL DOOR.
YEH--HERE WE ARE IN A CAGE WHILE THE BIRD MEN ARE FREE! THAT'S RICH! GEE, I WONDER HOW THEY'LL-- ER--K-KILL US
WELL--THEY CAN'T SHOOT US BECAUSE THEY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT FIREARMS, AND IT'S A GOOD THING THAT WE DIDN'T TEACH THEM HOW TO MAKE GUNS.
SAY! WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF IT BEFORE-- WOW! WE FORGOT ABOUT OUR TOMMY-GUN---THAT'LL GET US OUT OF HERE
THAT WOULD GET US OUT ALL RIGHT-- ONLY THE GUNS ARE IN THE SHIP!
OH--

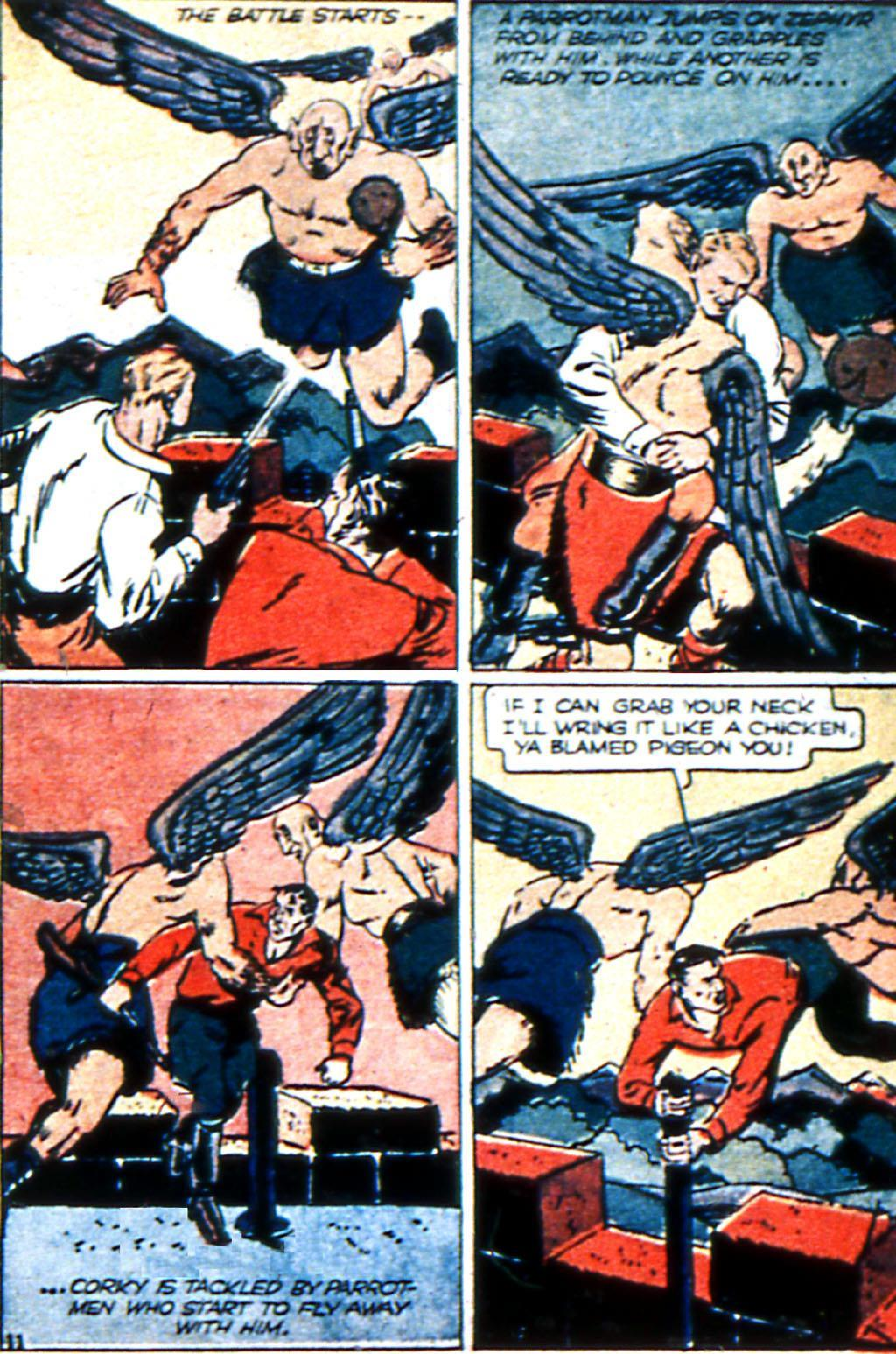

CORKY! COME HERE QUICK!
THE NIGHT PASSES SWIFTLY --- AND JUST BEFORE DAWN!
AGAINST THE MOONLIGHT THEY CAN DISCERN THE SINISTER FIGURE OF ROUDO SIGNALING TO UNSEEN [illegible]
WHY--IT'S ROUDO! I'LL BET THE CAD IS TELLING THE PARROTMEN IT'S SAFE TO ATTACK.
SOMEONE'S COMIN'-- I GUESS THEY'RE GOIN' TO TAKE US AWAY NOW!
PRINCESS TONKA! HOW DID YOU GET HERE?
I BRIBED THE GUARDS TO LET ME SEE YOU. OH, WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?
I KNOW--I KNOW-- YOU CAN HELP BY GETTING MY VIOLIN FOR ME. QUICK, IT'S IN THE ROCKET SHIP! HURRY!
YOUR VIOLIN--? WITH ONLY A FEW HOURS TO LIVE YOU WANT TO PLAY YOUR VIOLIN?
YES, QUICKLY- BRING HIS VIOLIN CASE. THERE ISN'T MUCH TIME!
NERO FIDDLED WHILE ROME BURNED. NOW IT'S MY TURN!
WHAT -- WHAT'S THAT?
LOOK! THE PARROT-MEN ARE ATTACKING! THEY'LL SLAUGHTER THESE DEFENSELESS BIRDMEN! IF WE COULD ONLY HELP!
THE PRINCESS LEAVES AND SUDDENLY THE STILLNESS OF THE NIGHT IS SHATTERED AS BEDLAM BREAKS LOOSE!

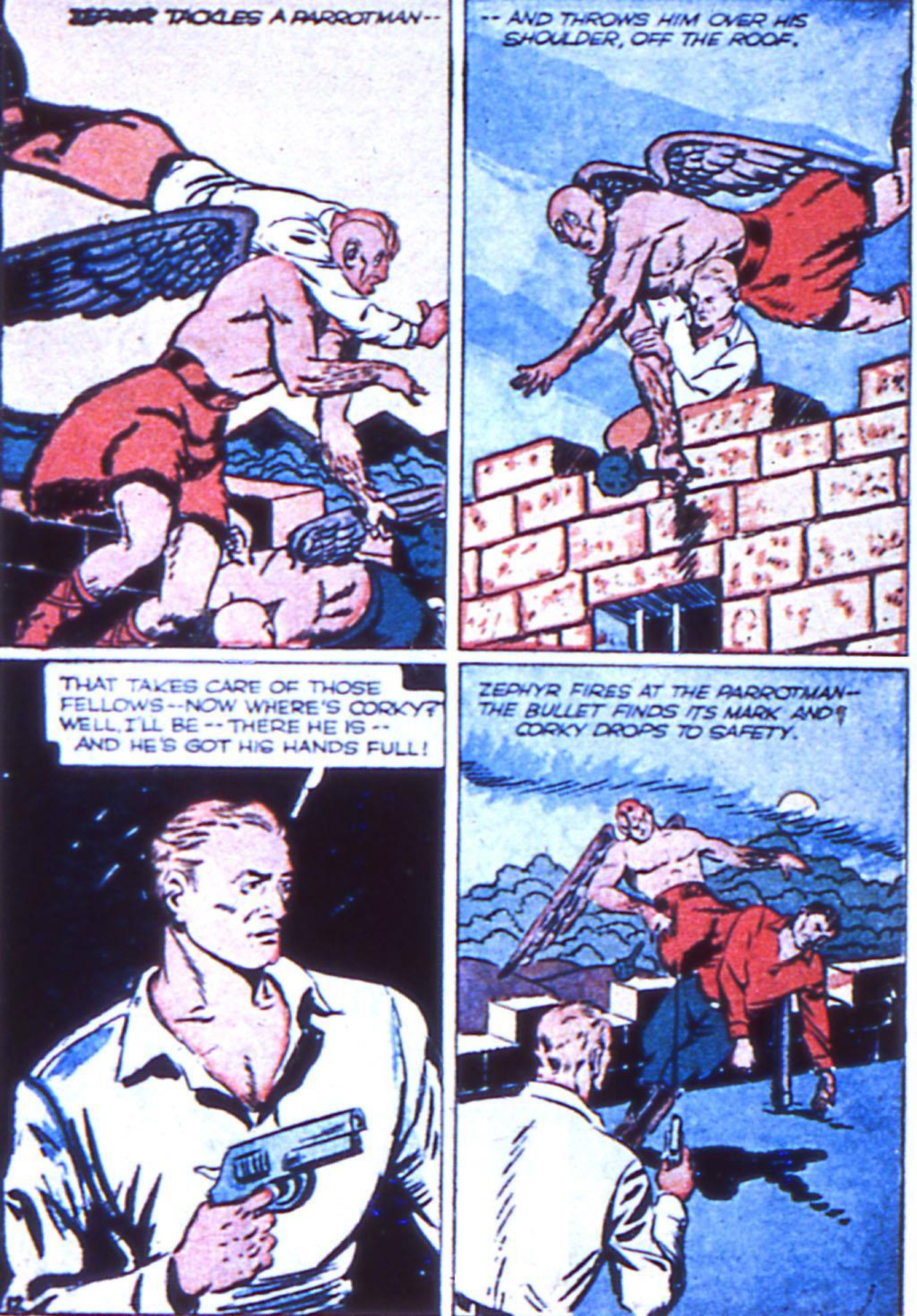

FROM THEIR CELL OUR HEROES HELPLESSLY WATCH THE INVADING HORDE OF UGLY PARROTMEN SWOOP DOWN ON THE UNPREPARED BIRDMEN!

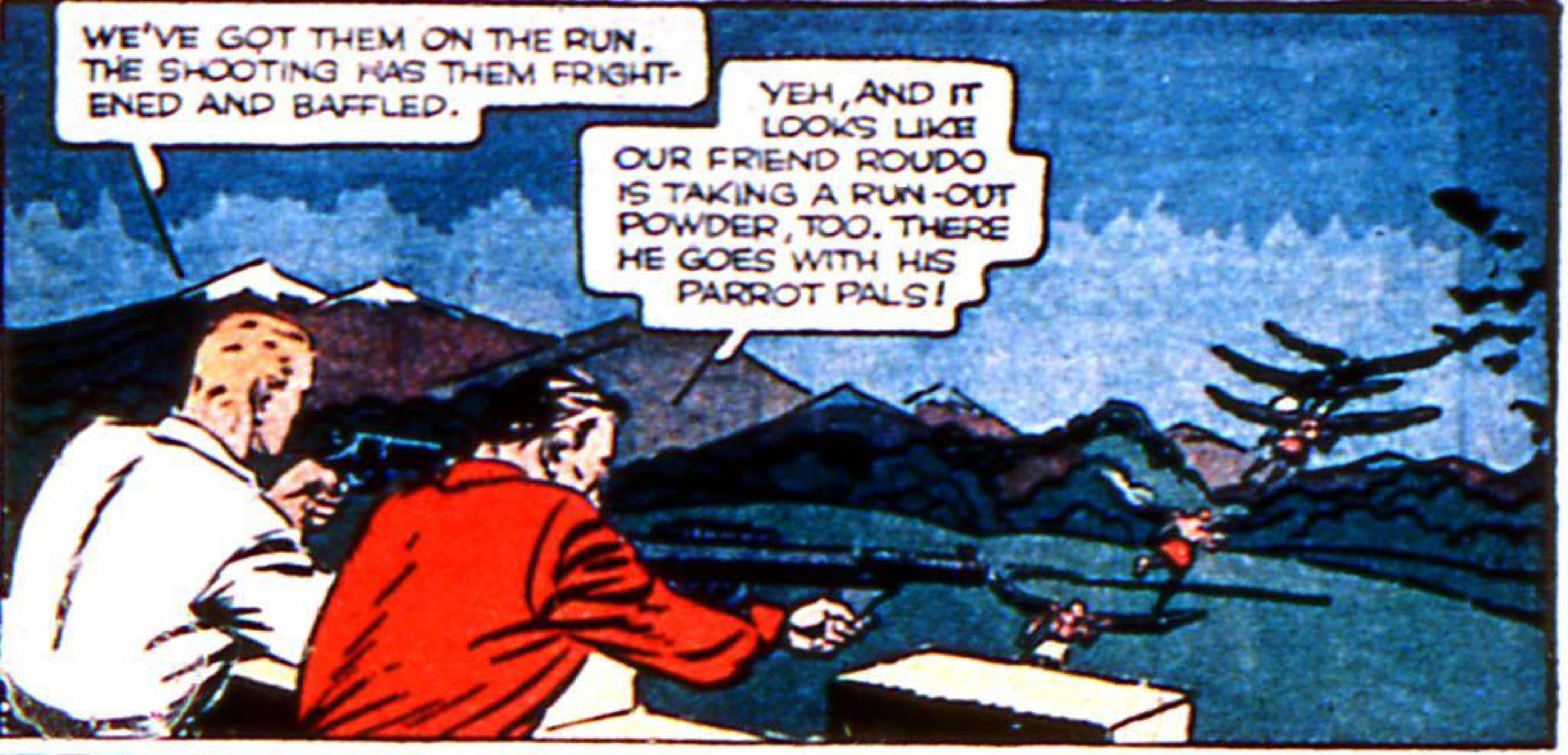

IF WE ONLY HAD THAT TOMMY-GUN -- WE COULD DO SOMETHING! WHERE CAN THE PRINCESS BE?

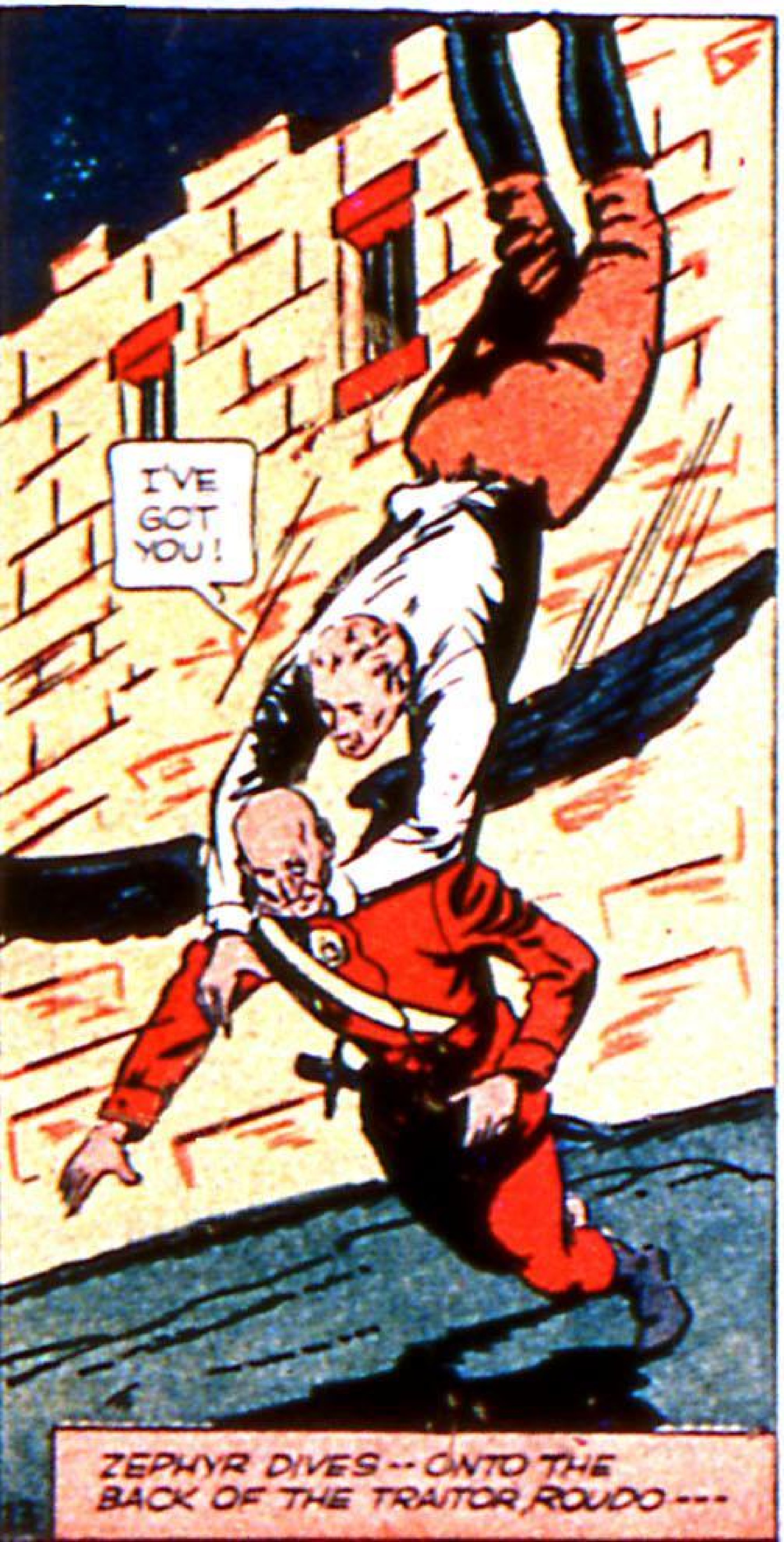

HERE SHE COMES! AND SHE'S GOT THE "VIOLIN"! C'MON, PRINCESS, OL' KID! RUN!

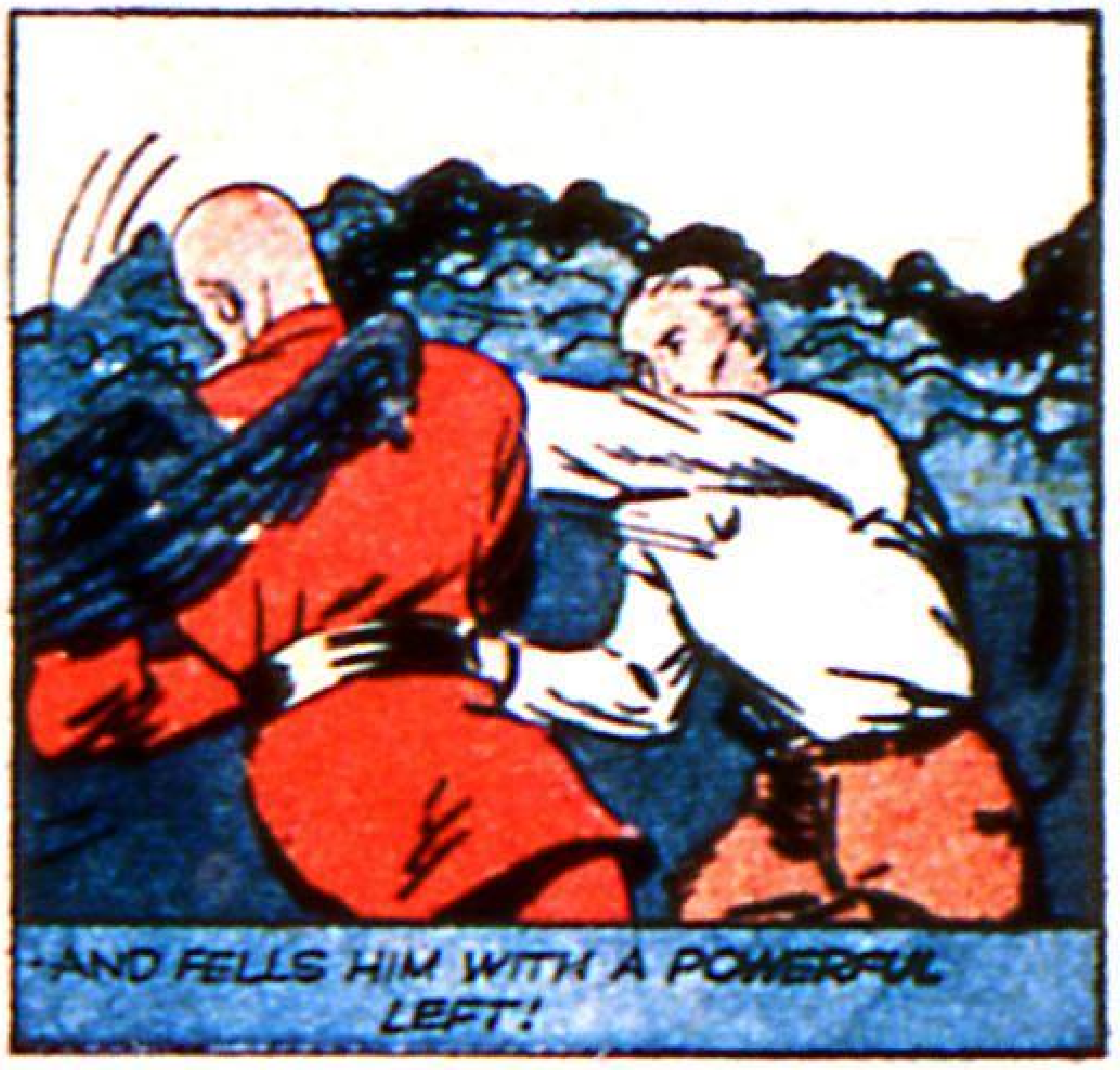

QUICK! GIVE IT HERE!
MY, WHAT A STRANGE LOOKING VIOLIN!
YEH--BUT YOU OUGHTA HEAR THE SWEET TUNE IT HAS WHEN I PLAY IT --- IT'LL KNOCK THE PARROTMEN OVER! NOW, PRINCESS, RUN AND HIDE SOMEPLACE WHILE WE PRACTISE OUR LESSONS
ONE SHOT FROM HIS AUTOMATIC AND ZEPHYR BLASTS THE LOCK OPEN!
IT'S OPEN -- LET'S GO!
I'M RIGHT BEHIND YOU. LEAD ON, McDUFF!
SHALL I LET 'EM HAVE IT, BOSS?
FIRE AWAY!

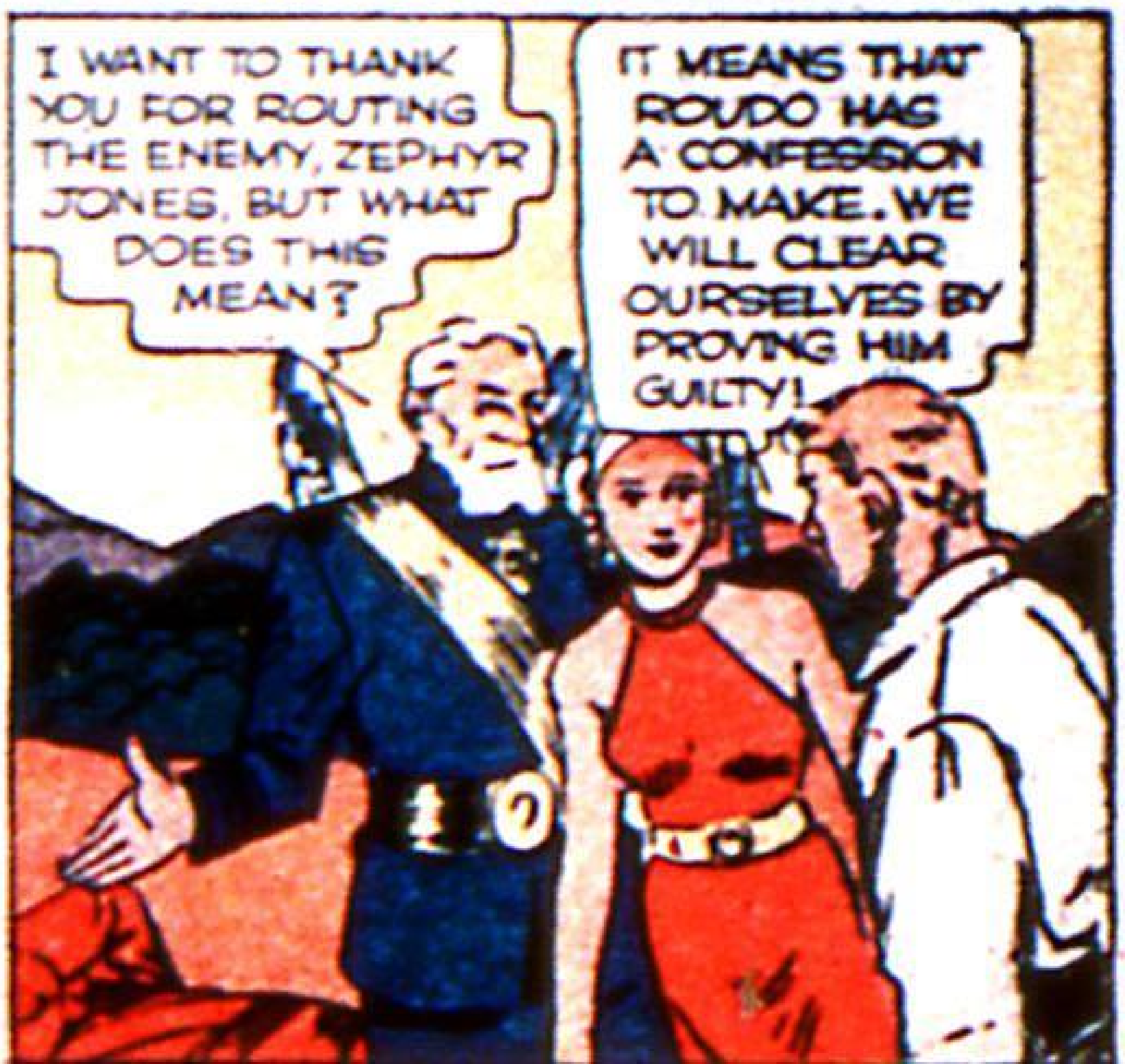

THE BATTLE STARTS --
A PARROTMAN JUMPS ON ZEPHYR FROM BEHIND AND GRAPPLES WITH HIM. WHILE ANOTHER IS READY TO POUNCE ON HIM....
...CORKY IS TACKLED BY PARROT-MEN WHO START TO FLY AWAY WITH HIM.
IF I CAN GRAB YOUR NECK I'LL WRING IT LIKE A CHICKEN, YA BLAMED PIGEON YOU!

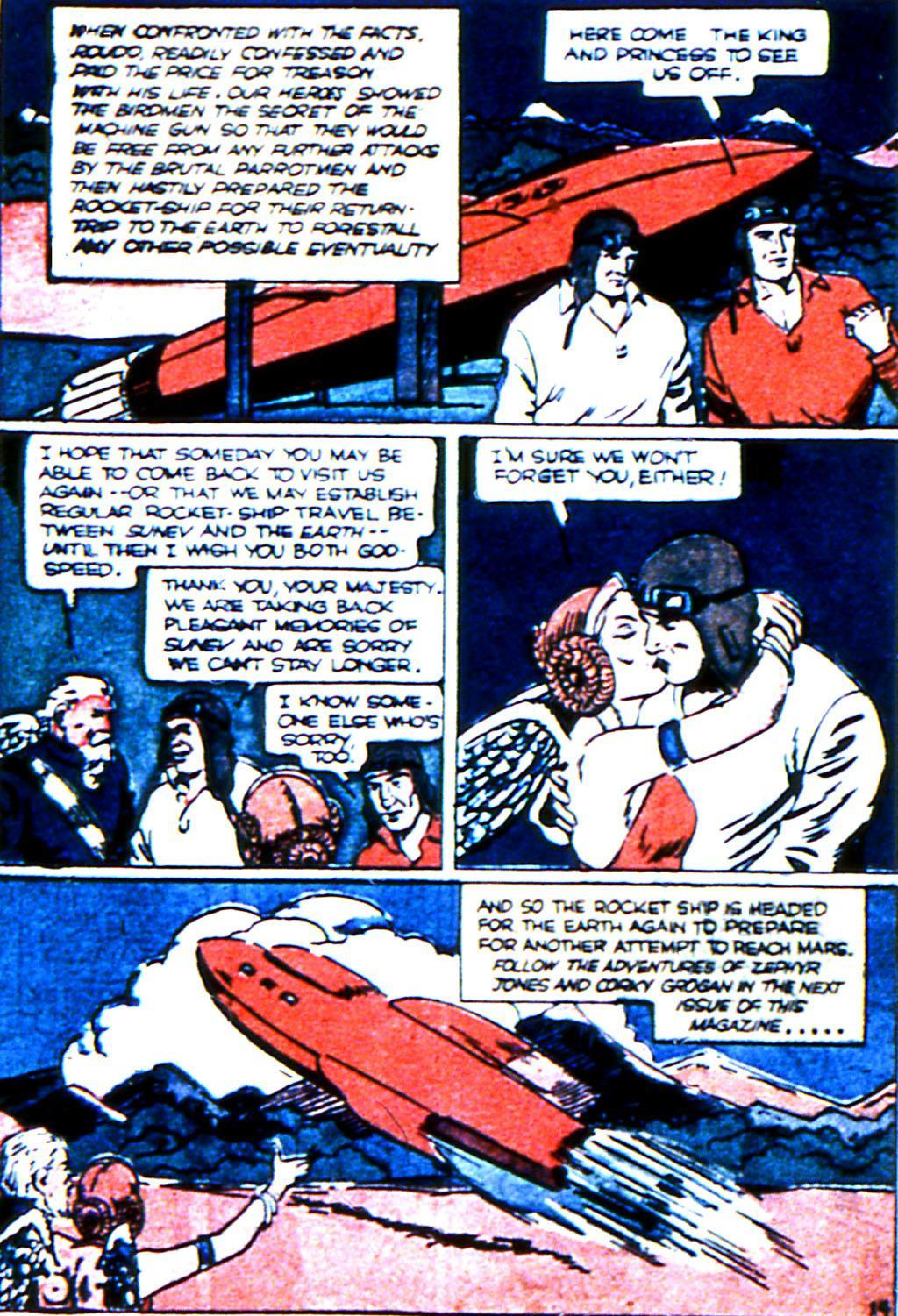

ZEPHYR TACKLES A PARROTMAN--
-- AND THROWS HIM OVER HIS SHOULDER, OFF THE ROOF.
THAT TAKES CARE OF THOSE FELLOWS--NOW WHERE'S CORKY? WELL, I'LL BE -- THERE HE IS -- AND HE'S GOT HIS HANDS FULL!
ZEPHYR FIRES AT THE PARROTMAN-- THE BULLET FINDS ITS MARK AND CORKY DROPS TO SAFETY.

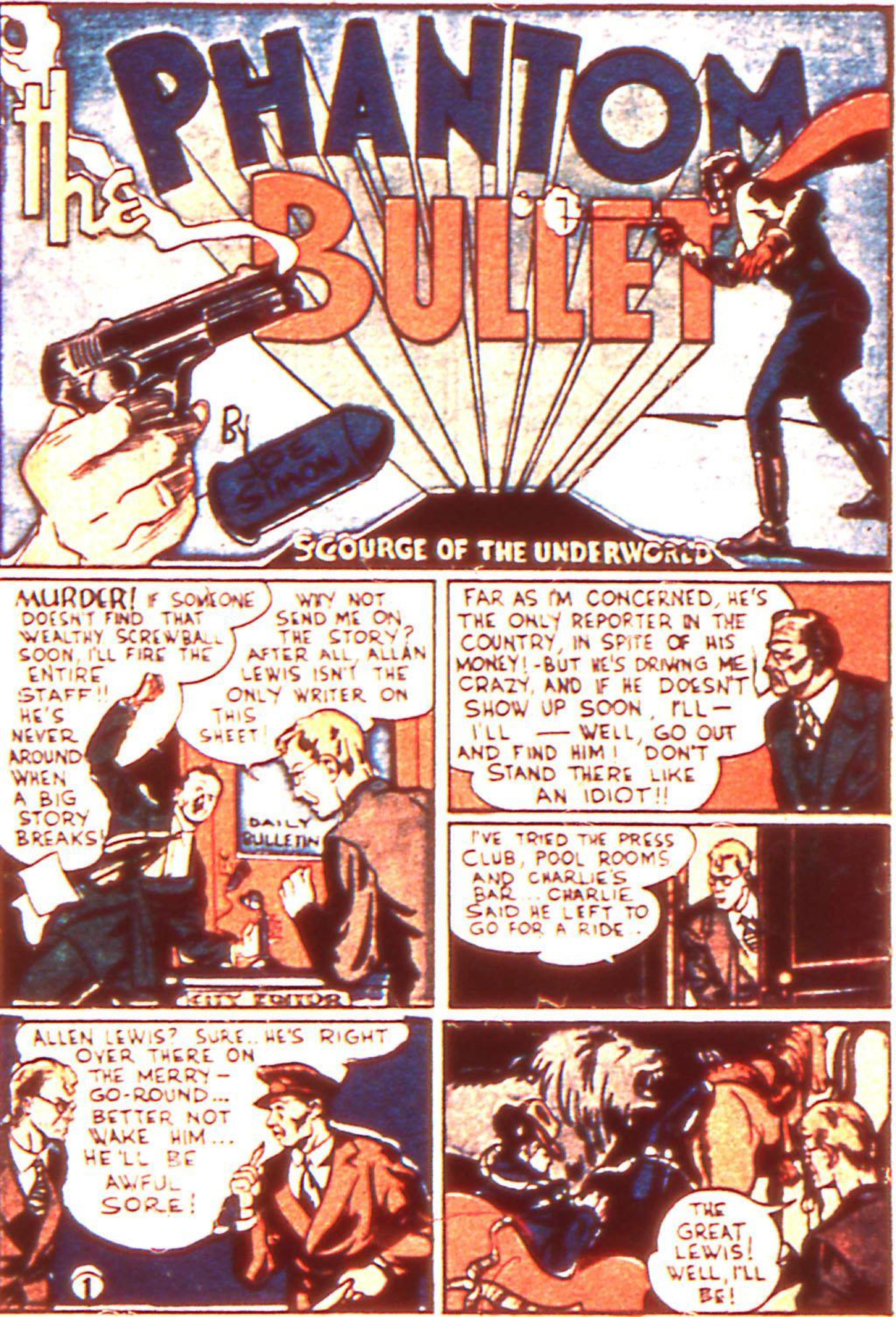

WE'VE GOT THEM ON THE RUN. THE SHOOTING HAS THEM FRIGHTENED AND BAFFLED.
YEH, AND IT LOOKS LIKE OUR FRIEND ROUDO IS TAKING A RUN-OUT POWDER, TOO. THERE HE GOES WITH HIS PARROT PALS!

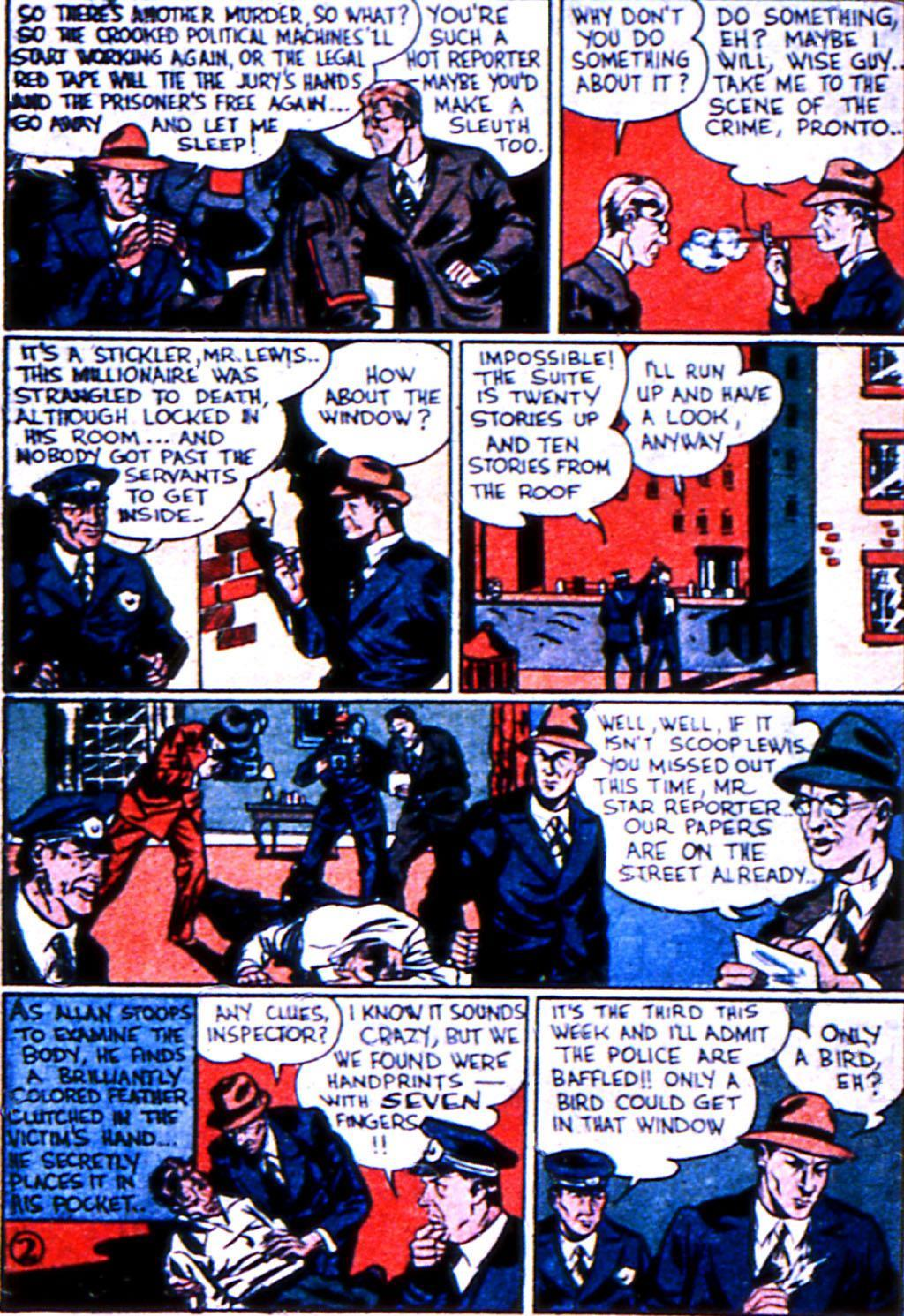

I'VE GOT YOU!
ZEPHYR DIVES -- ONTO THE BACK OF THE TRAITOR, ROUDO ---

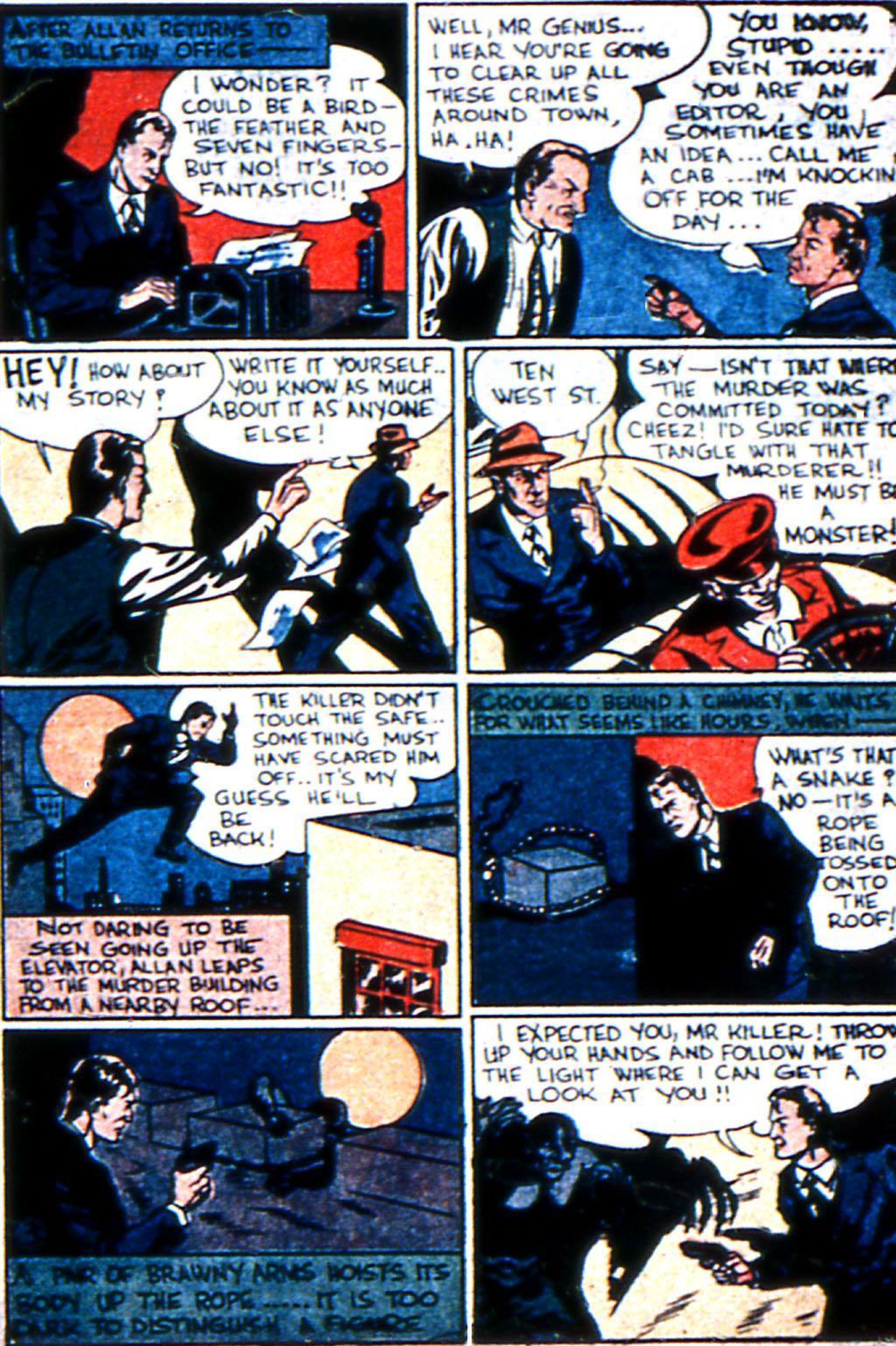

-AND FELLS HIM WITH A POWERFUL LEFT!

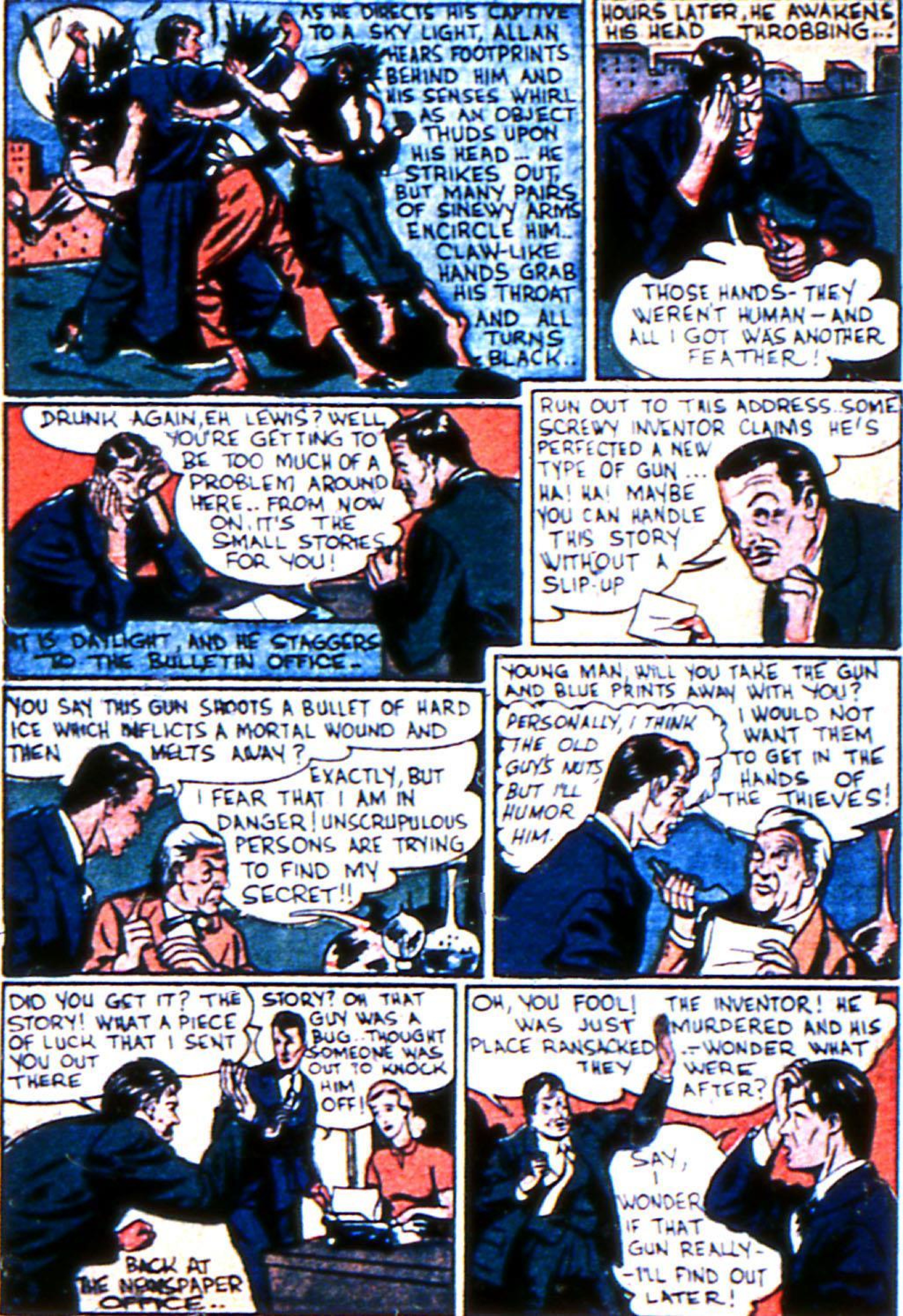

I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR ROUTING THE ENEMY, ZEPHYR JONES, BUT WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?
IT MEANS THAT ROUDO HAS A CONFESSION TO MAKE. WE WILL CLEAR OURSELVES BY PROVING HIM GUILTY!

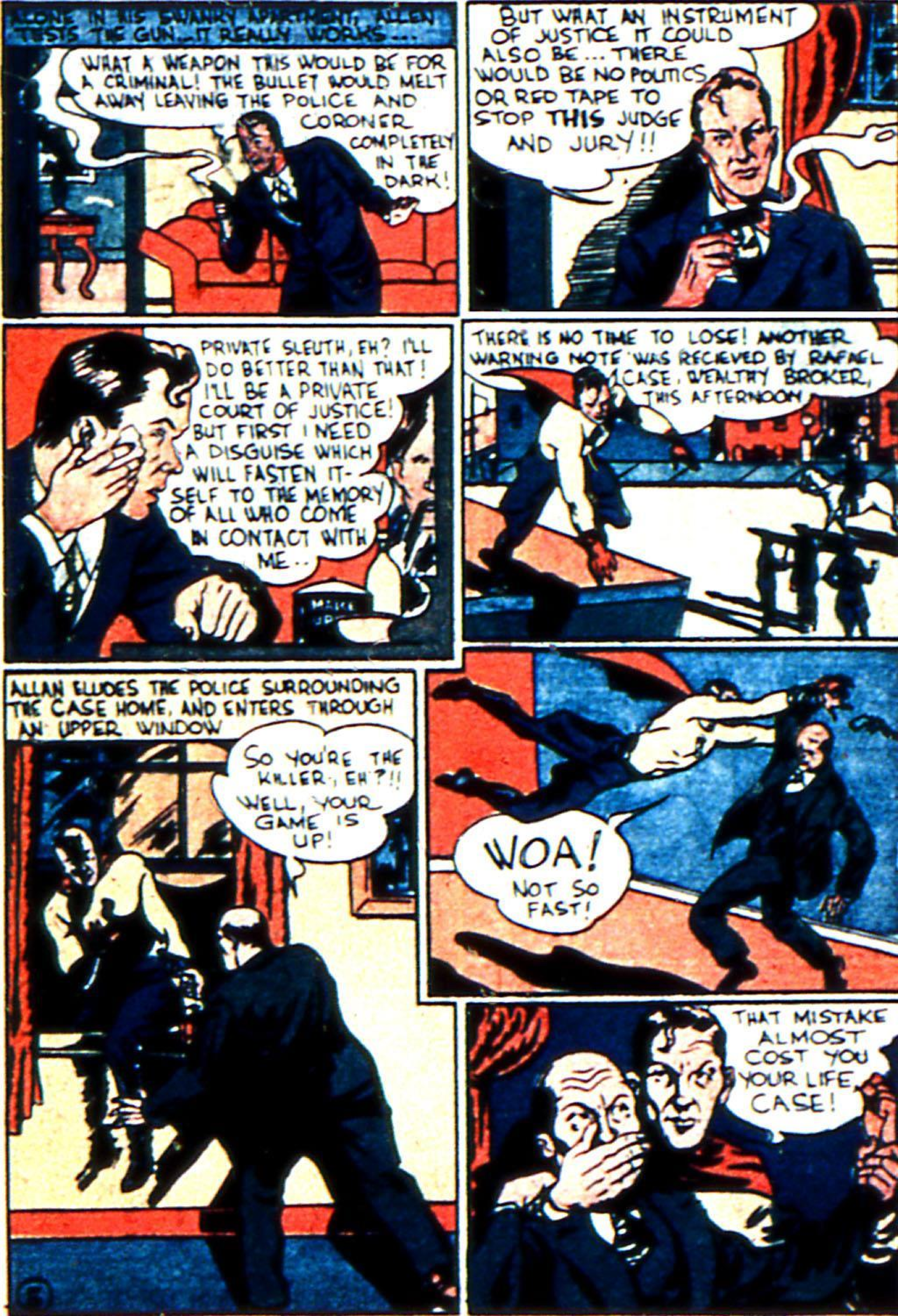

WHEN CONFRONTED WITH THE FACTS, ROUDO, READILY CONFESSED AND PAID THE PRICE FOR TREASON WITH HIS LIFE. OUR HEROES SHOWED THE BIRDMEN THE SECRET OF THE MACHINE GUN SO THAT THEY WOULD BE FREE FROM ANY FURTHER ATTACKS BY THE BRUTAL PARROTMEN AND THEN HASTILY PREPARED THE ROCKET-SHIP FOR THEIR RETURN-TRIP TO THE EARTH TO FORESTALL ANY OTHER POSSIBLE EVENTUALITY
HERE COME THE KING AND PRINCESS TO SEE US OFF.
I HOPE THAT SOMEDAY YOU MAY BE ABLE TO COME BACK TO VISIT US AGAIN --OR THAT WE MAY ESTABLISH REGULAR ROCKET-SHIP TRAVEL BETWEEN SUNEV AND THE EARTH -- UNTIL THEN I WISH YOU BOTH GOD-SPEED.
THANK YOU, YOUR MAJESTY. WE ARE TAKING BACK PLEASANT MEMORIES OF SUNEV AND ARE SORRY WE CAN'T STAY LONGER.
I KNOW SOME-ONE ELSE WHO'S SORRY, TOO.
I'M SURE WE WON'T FORGET YOU, EITHER!
AND SO THE ROCKET SHIP IS HEADED FOR THE EARTH AGAIN TO PREPARE FOR ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO REACH MARS. FOLLOW THE ADVENTURES OF ZEPHYR JONES AND CORKY GROGAN IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THIS MAGAZINE.....

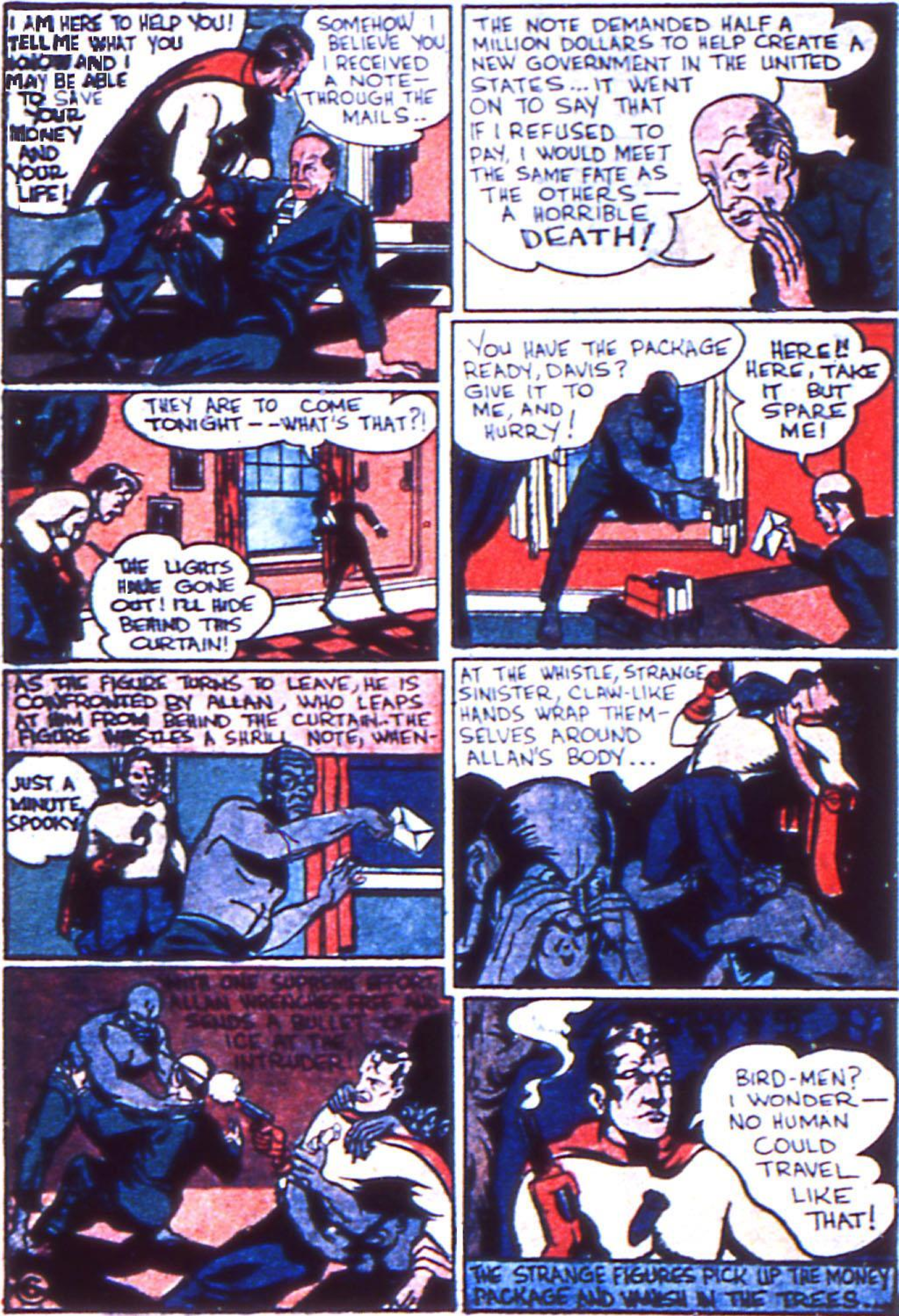

THE PHANTOM BULLET
By JOE SIMON
SCOURGE OF THE UNDERWORLD
MURDER! IF SOMEONE DOESN'T FIND THAT WEALTHY SCREWBALL SOON, I'LL FIRE THE ENTIRE STAFF!! HE'S NEVER AROUND WHEN A BIG STORY BREAKS!
WHY NOT SEND ME ON THE STORY? AFTER ALL, ALLAN LEWIS ISN'T THE ONLY WRITER ON THIS SHEET!
DAILY BULLETIN
CITY EDITOR
FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, HE'S THE ONLY REPORTER IN THE COUNTRY, IN SPITE OF HIS MONEY! - BUT HE'S DRIVING ME CRAZY, AND IF HE DOESN'T SHOW UP SOON, I'LL— I'LL — WELL, GO OUT AND FIND HIM! DON'T STAND THERE LIKE AN IDIOT!!
I'VE TRIED THE PRESS CLUB, POOL ROOMS AND CHARLIE'S BAR... CHARLIE SAID HE LEFT TO GO FOR A RIDE.
ALLEN LEWIS? SURE.. HE'S RIGHT OVER THERE ON THE MERRY-GO-ROUND... BETTER NOT WAKE HIM... HE'LL BE AWFUL SORE!
THE GREAT LEWIS! WELL, I'LL BE!

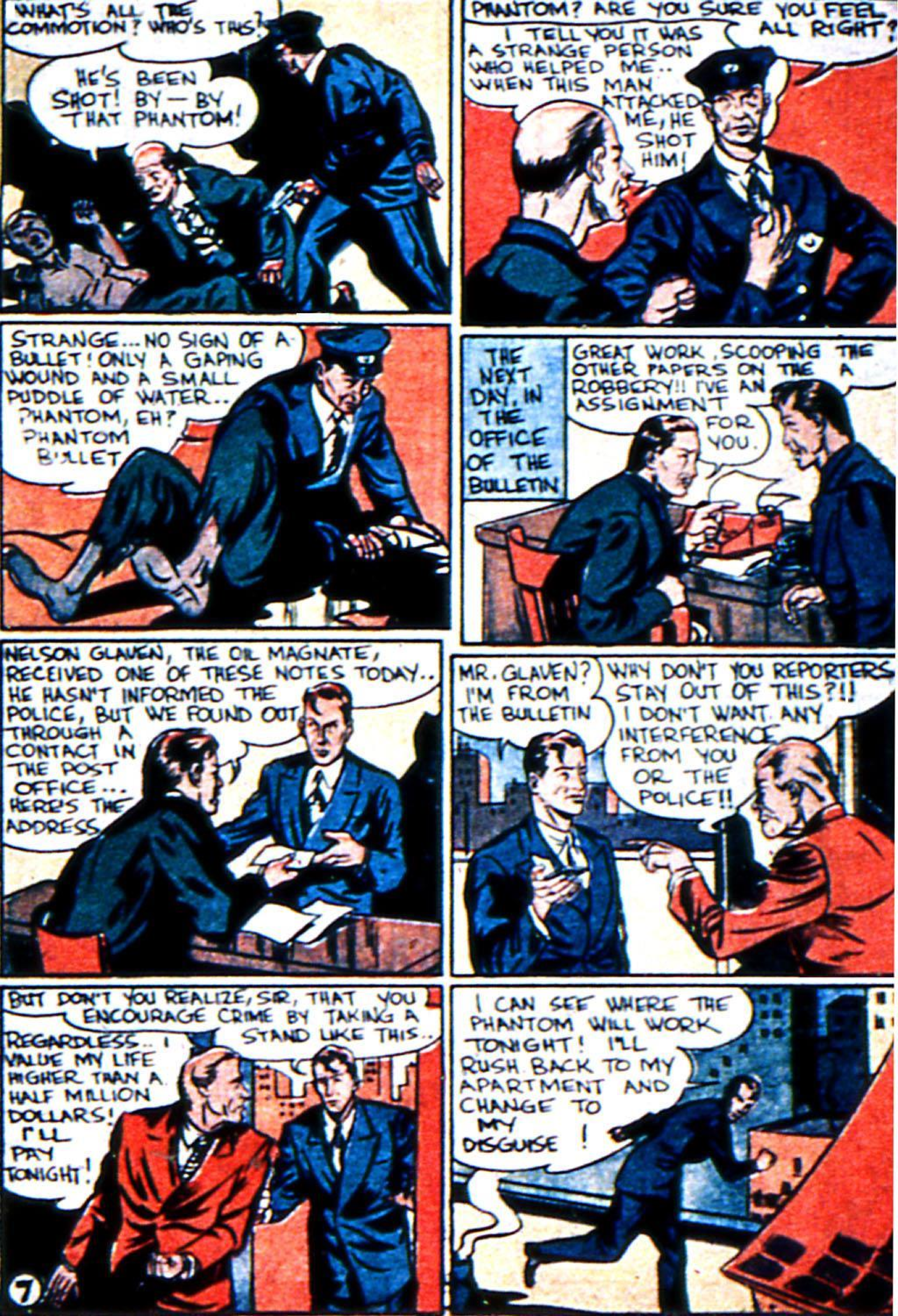

SO THERE'S ANOTHER MURDER, SO WHAT? SO THE CROOKED POLITICAL MACHINES'LL START WORKING AGAIN, OR THE LEGAL RED TAPE WILL TIE THE JURY'S HANDS AND THE PRISONER'S FREE AGAIN... GO AWAY AND LET ME SLEEP!
YOU'RE SUCH A HOT REPORTER —MAYBE YOU'D MAKE A SLEUTH TOO.
WHY DON'T YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT?
DO SOMETHING, EH? MAYBE I WILL, WISE GUY.. TAKE ME TO THE SCENE OF THE CRIME, PRONTO..
IT'S A STICKLER, MR. LEWIS.. THIS MILLIONAIRE WAS STRANGLED TO DEATH, ALTHOUGH LOCKED IN HIS ROOM... AND NOBODY GOT PAST THE SERVANTS TO GET INSIDE..
HOW ABOUT THE WINDOW?
IMPOSSIBLE! THE SUITE IS TWENTY STORIES UP AND TEN STORIES FROM THE ROOF
I'LL RUN UP AND HAVE A LOOK, ANYWAY
WELL, WELL, IF IT ISN'T SCOOP LEWIS. YOU MISSED OUT THIS TIME, MR. STAR REPORTER... OUR PAPERS ARE ON THE STREET ALREADY..
AS ALLAN STOOPS TO EXAMINE THE BODY, HE FINDS A BRILLIANTLY COLORED FEATHER CLUTCHED IN THE VICTIM'S HAND... HE SECRETLY PLACES IT IN HIS POCKET..
ANY CLUES, INSPECTOR?
I KNOW IT SOUNDS CRAZY, BUT WE WE FOUND WERE HANDPRINTS — WITH SEVEN FINGERS !!
IT'S THE THIRD THIS WEEK AND I'LL ADMIT THE POLICE ARE BAFFLED!! ONLY A BIRD COULD GET IN THAT WINDOW
ONLY A BIRD, EH?
2

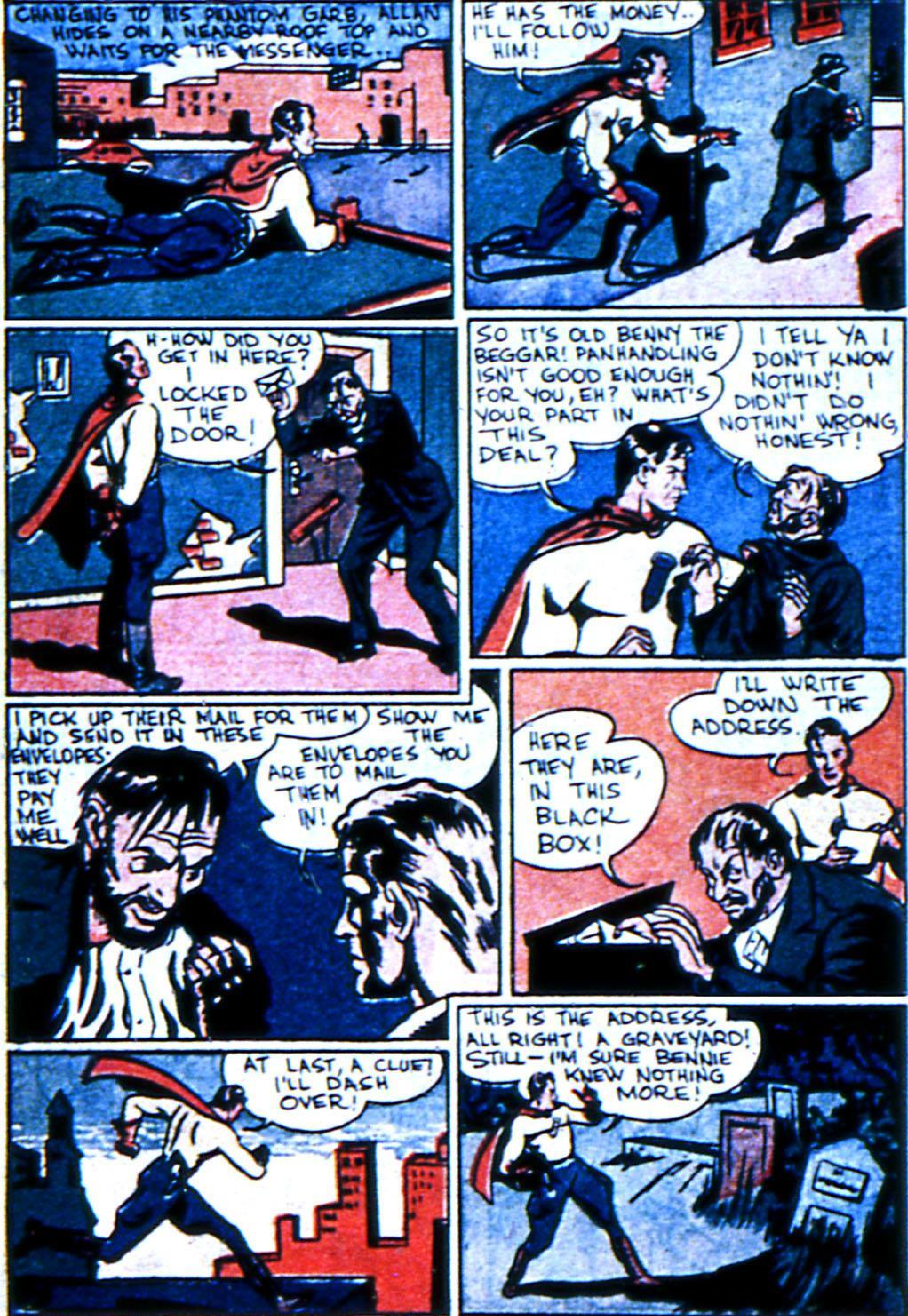

AFTER ALLAN RETURNS TO THE BULLETIN OFFICE——
I WONDER? IT COULD BE A BIRD— THE FEATHER AND SEVEN FINGERS— BUT NO! IT'S TOO FANTASTIC!!
WELL, MR GENIUS... I HEAR YOU'RE GOING TO CLEAR UP ALL THESE CRIMES AROUND TOWN, HA.HA!
YOU KNOW, STUPID ..... EVEN THOUGH YOU ARE AN EDITOR, YOU SOMETIMES HAVE AN IDEA... CALL ME A CAB ...I'M KNOCKIN OFF FOR THE DAY...
HEY! HOW ABOUT MY STORY?
WRITE IT YOURSELF.. YOU KNOW AS MUCH ABOUT IT AS ANYONE ELSE!
TEN WEST ST.
SAY—ISN'T THAT WHER THE MURDER WAS COMMITTED TODAY? CHEEZ! I'D SURE HATE TO TANGLE WITH THAT MURDERER!! HE MUST B A MONSTER!
THE KILLER DIDN'T TOUCH THE SAFE.. SOMETHING MUST HAVE SCARED HIM OFF.. IT'S MY GUESS HE'LL BE BACK!
NOT DARING TO BE SEEN GOING UP THE ELEVATOR, ALLAN LEAPS TO THE MURDER BUILDING FROM A NEARBY ROOF...
CROUCHED BEHIND A CHIMNEY, HE WAITS FOR WHAT SEEMS LIKE HOURS, WHEN——
WHAT'S THAT A SNAKE? NO—IT'S A ROPE BEING TOSSED ONTO THE ROOF!
A PAIR OF BRAWNY ARMS HOISTS ITS BODY UP THE ROPE..... IT IS TOO DARK TO DISTINGUISH A FIGURE
I EXPECTED YOU, MR KILLER! THROW UP YOUR HANDS AND FOLLOW ME TO THE LIGHT WHERE I CAN GET A LOOK AT YOU!!

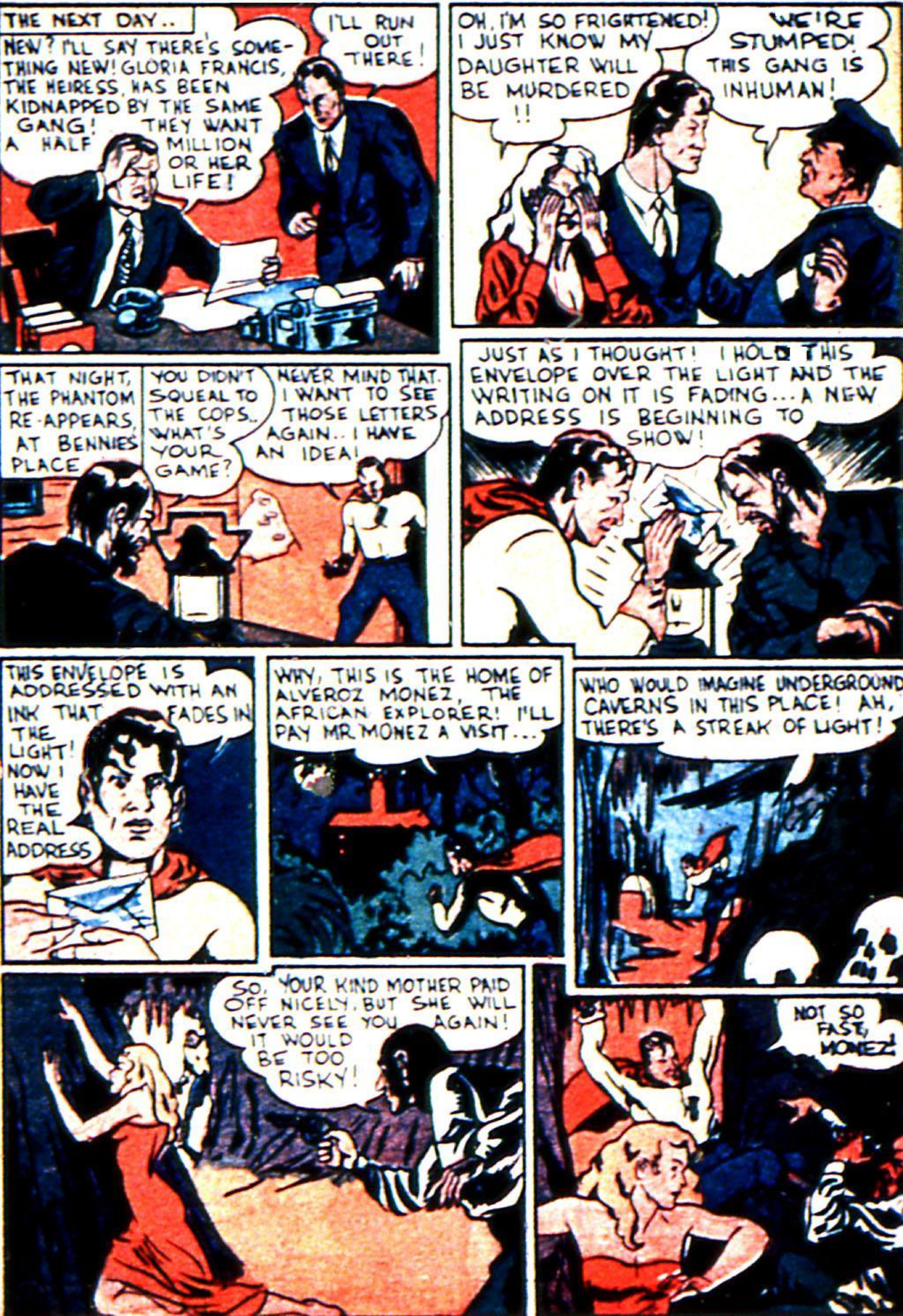

AS HE DIRECTS HIS CAPTIVE TO A SKY LIGHT, ALLAN HEARS FOOTPRINTS BEHIND HIM AND HIS SENSES WHIRL AS AN OBJECT THUDS UPON HIS HEAD... HE STRIKES OUT, BUT MANY PAIRS OF SINEWY ARMS ENCIRCLE HIM.. CLAW-LIKE HANDS GRAB HIS THROAT AND ALL TURNS BLACK..
HOURS LATER, HE AWAKENS HIS HEAD THROBBING...
THOSE HANDS- THEY WEREN'T HUMAN - AND ALL I GOT WAS ANOTHER FEATHER!
DRUNK AGAIN, EH LEWIS? WELL YOU'RE GETTING TO BE TOO MUCH OF A PROBLEM AROUND HERE.. FROM NOW ON, IT'S THE SMALL STORIES FOR YOU!
IT IS DAYLIGHT, AND HE STAGGERS TO THE BULLETIN OFFICE..
RUN OUT TO THIS ADDRESS.. SOME SCREWY INVENTOR CLAIMS HE'S PERFECTED A NEW TYPE OF GUN... HA! HA! MAYBE YOU CAN HANDLE THIS STORY WITHOUT A SLIP-UP
YOU SAY THIS GUN SHOOTS A BULLET OF HARD ICE WHICH INFLICTS A MORTAL WOUND AND THEN MELTS AWAY?
EXACTLY, BUT I FEAR THAT I AM IN DANGER! UNSCRUPULOUS PERSONS ARE TRYING TO FIND MY SECRET!!
YOUNG MAN, WILL YOU TAKE THE GUN AND BLUE PRINTS AWAY WITH YOU? I WOULD NOT WANT THEM TO GET IN THE HANDS OF THE THIEVES!
PERSONALLY, I THINK THE OLD GUY'S NUTS BUT I'LL HUMOR HIM.
DID YOU GET IT? THE STORY! WHAT A PIECE OF LUCK THAT I SENT YOU OUT THERE
STORY? OH THAT GUY WAS A BUG.. THOUGHT SOMEONE WAS OUT TO KNOCK HIM OFF!
BACK AT THE NEWSPAPER OFFICE..
OH, YOU FOOL! THE INVENTOR! HE WAS JUST MURDERED AND HIS PLACE RANSACKED --WONDER WHAT THEY WERE AFTER?
SAY, I WONDER IF THAT GUN REALLY- -I'LL FIND OUT LATER!

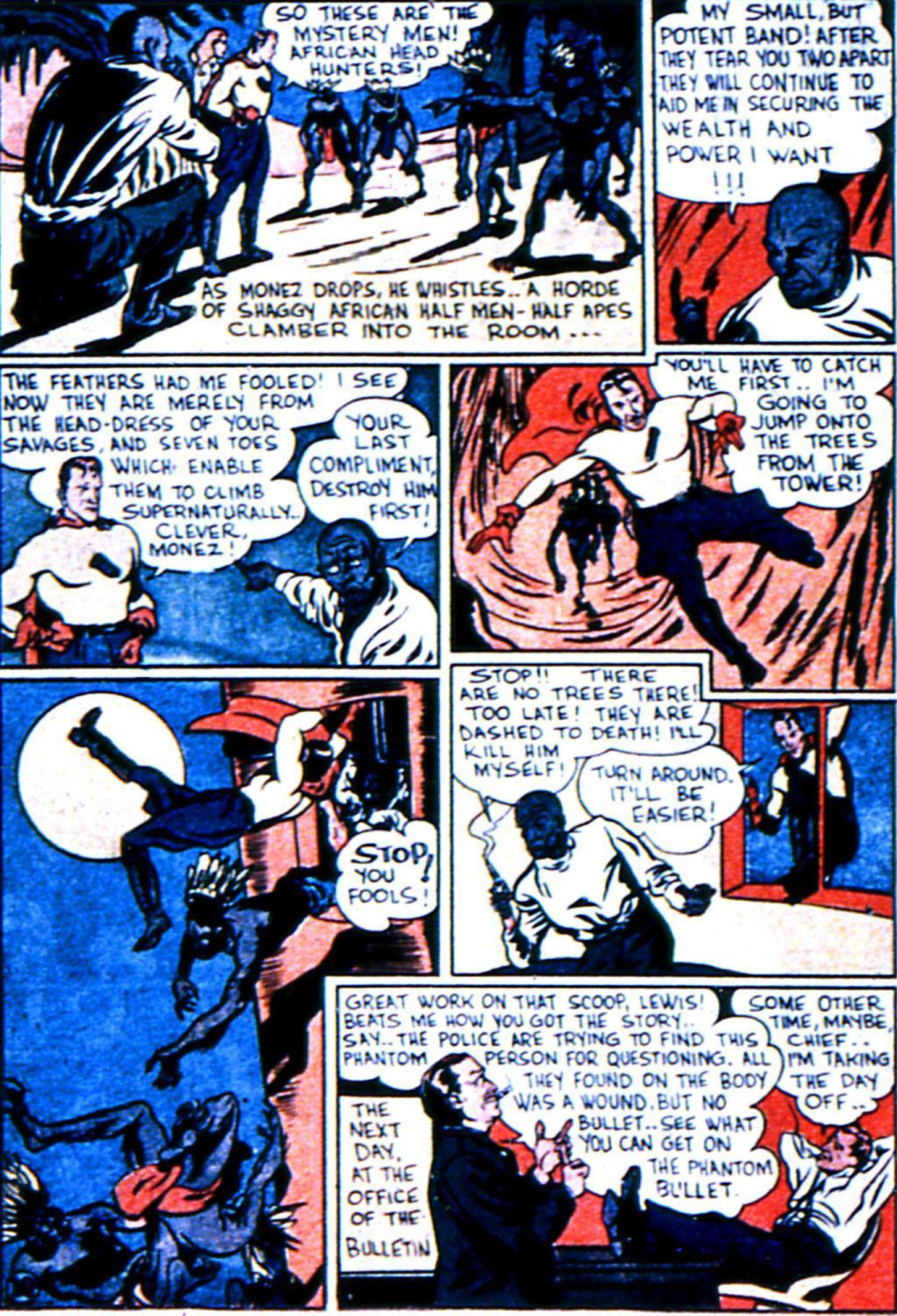

ALONE IN HIS SWANKY APARTMENT, ALLEN TESTS THE GUN...IT REALLY WORKS...
WHAT A WEAPON THIS WOULD BE FOR A CRIMINAL! THE BULLET WOULD MELT AWAY LEAVING THE POLICE AND CORONER COMPLETELY IN THE DARK!
BUT WHAT AN INSTRUMENT OF JUSTICE IT COULD ALSO BE... THERE WOULD BE NO POLITICS OR RED TAPE TO STOP THIS JUDGE AND JURY!!
PRIVATE SLEUTH, EH? I'LL DO BETTER THAN THAT! I'LL BE A PRIVATE COURT OF JUSTICE! BUT FIRST I NEED A DISGUISE WHICH WILL FASTEN IT-SELF TO THE MEMORY OF ALL WHO COME IN CONTACT WITH ME..
MAKE UP
THERE IS NO TIME TO LOSE! ANOTHER WARNING NOTE WAS RECIEVED BY RAFAEL CASE, WEALTHY BROKER, THIS AFTERNOON
ALLAN ELUDES THE POLICE SURROUNDING THE CASE HOME, AND ENTERS THROUGH AN UPPER WINDOW
So YOU'RE THE KILLER, EH?!! WELL, YOUR GAME IS UP!
WOA! NOT SO FAST!
THAT MISTAKE ALMOST COST YOU YOUR LIFE, CASE!

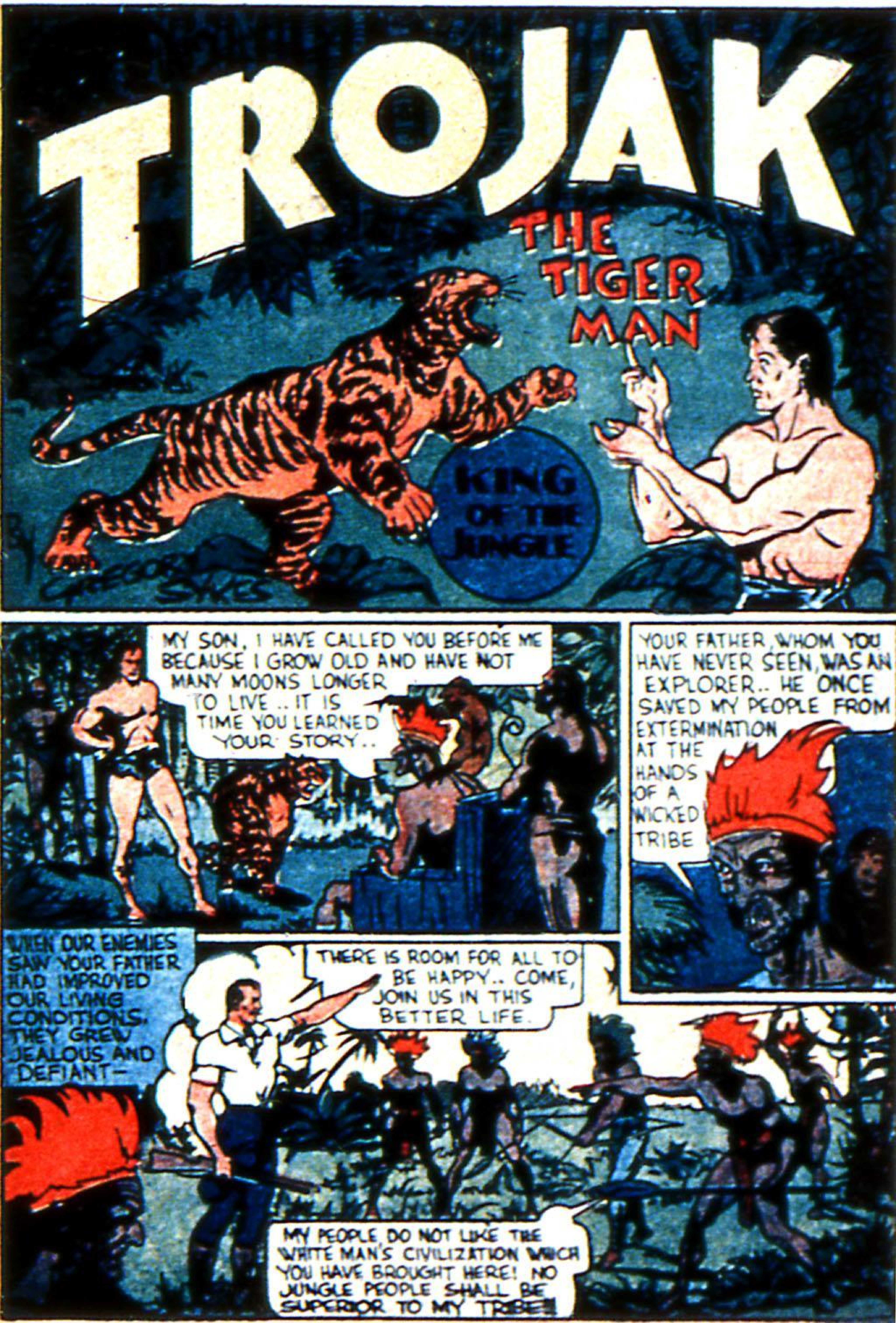

I AM HERE TO HELP YOU! TELL ME WHAT YOU KNOW AND I MAY BE ABLE TO SAVE YOUR MONEY AND YOUR LIFE!
SOMEHOW I BELIEVE YOU. I RECEIVED A NOTE— THROUGH THE MAILS..
THE NOTE DEMANDED HALF A MILLION DOLLARS TO HELP CREATE A NEW GOVERNMENT IN THE UNITED STATES... IT WENT ON TO SAY THAT IF I REFUSED TO PAY, I WOULD MEET THE SAME FATE AS THE OTHERS— A HORRIBLE DEATH!
THEY ARE TO COME TONIGHT - - WHAT'S THAT?!
THE LIGHTS HAVE GONE OUT! I'LL HIDE BEHIND THIS CURTAIN!
YOU HAVE THE PACKAGE READY, DAVIS? GIVE IT TO ME, AND HURRY!
HERE!! HERE, TAKE IT BUT SPARE ME!
AS THE FIGURE TURNS TO LEAVE, HE IS CONFRONTED BY ALLAN, WHO LEAPS AT HIM FROM BEHIND THE CURTAIN- THE FIGURE WHISTLES A SHRILL NOTE, WHEN-
JUST A MINUTE, SPOOKY!
AT THE WHISTLE, STRANGE SINISTER, CLAW-LIKE HANDS WRAP THEMSELVES AROUND ALLAN'S BODY...
WITH ONE SUPREME EFFORT ALLAN WRENCHES FREE AND SENDS A BULLET OF ICE AT THE INTRUDER!
BIRD-MEN? I WONDER— NO HUMAN COULD TRAVEL LIKE THAT!
THE STRANGE FIGURES PICK UP THE MONEY PACKAGE AND VANISH IN THE TREES...

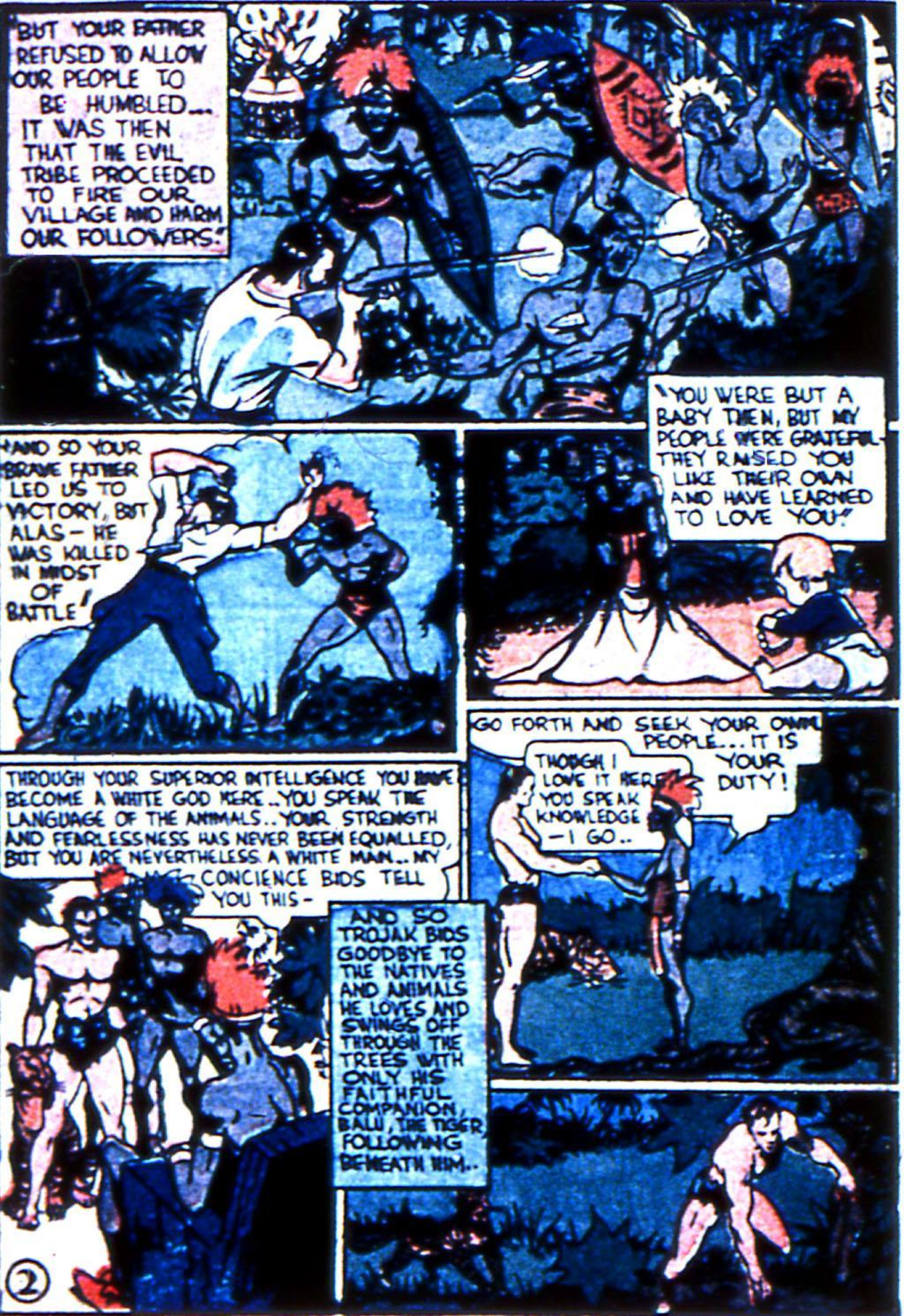

WHAT'S ALL THE COMMOTION? WHO'S THIS?
HE'S BEEN SHOT! BY — BY THAT PHANTOM!
PHANTOM? ARE YOU SURE YOU FEEL ALL RIGHT?
I TELL YOU IT WAS A STRANGE PERSON WHO HELPED ME.. WHEN THIS MAN ATTACKED ME, HE SHOT HIM!
STRANGE... NO SIGN OF A BULLET! ONLY A GAPING WOUND AND A SMALL PUDDLE OF WATER.. PHANTOM, EH? PHANTOM BULLET
THE NEXT DAY, IN THE OFFICE OF THE BULLETIN
GREAT WORK, SCOOPING THE OTHER PAPERS ON THE ROBBERY!! I'VE AN ASSIGNMENT FOR YOU.
A
NELSON GLAVEN, THE OIL MAGNATE, RECEIVED ONE OF THESE NOTES TODAY.. HE HASN'T INFORMED THE POLICE, BUT WE FOUND OUT THROUGH A CONTACT IN THE POST OFFICE... HERE'S THE ADDRESS.
MR. GLAVEN? I'M FROM THE BULLETIN
WHY DON'T YOU REPORTERS STAY OUT OF THIS?!! I DON'T WANT ANY INTERFERENCE FROM YOU OR THE POLICE!!
BUT DON'T YOU REALIZE, SIR, THAT YOU ENCOURAGE CRIME BY TAKING A STAND LIKE THIS..
REGARDLESS.. I VALUE MY LIFE HIGHER THAN A HALF MILLION DOLLARS! I'LL PAY TONIGHT!
I CAN SEE WHERE THE PHANTOM WILL WORK TONIGHT! I'LL RUSH BACK TO MY APARTMENT AND CHANGE TO MY DISGUISE!
7

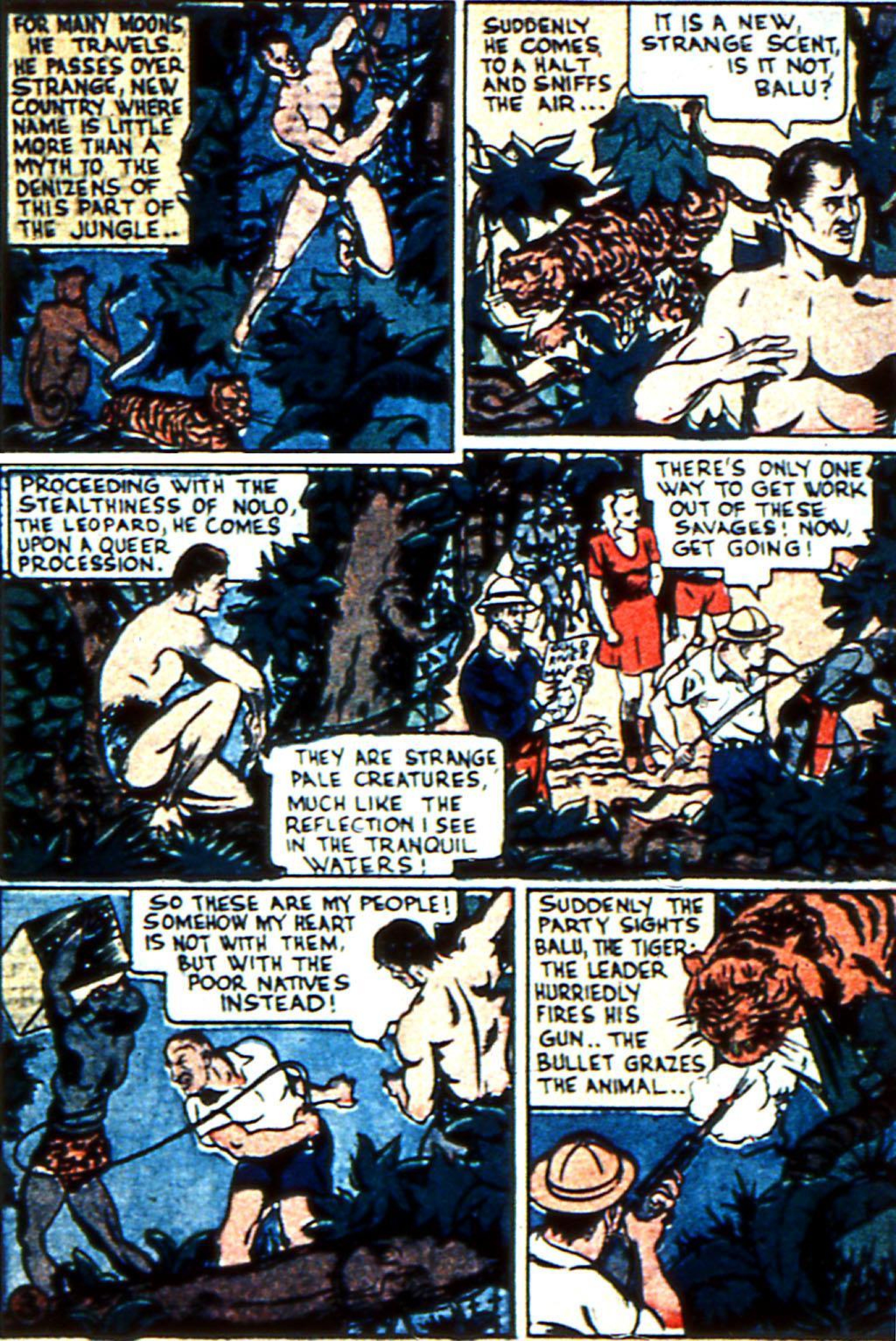

CHANGING TO HIS PHANTOM GARB, ALLAN HIDES ON A NEARBY ROOF TOP AND WAITS FOR THE MESSENGER...
HE HAS THE MONEY.. I'LL FOLLOW HIM!
H-HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE? I LOCKED THE DOOR!
SO IT'S OLD BENNY THE BEGGAR! PANHANDLING ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU, EH? WHAT'S YOUR PART IN THIS DEAL?
I TELL YA I DON'T KNOW NOTHIN'! I DIDN'T DO NOTHIN' WRONG, HONEST!
I PICK UP THEIR MAIL FOR THEM AND SEND IT IN THESE ENVELOPES. THEY PAY ME WELL
SHOW ME THE ENVELOPES YOU ARE TO MAIL THEM IN!
HERE THEY ARE, IN THIS BLACK BOX!
I'LL WRITE DOWN THE ADDRESS.
AT LAST, A CLUE! I'LL DASH OVER!
THIS IS THE ADDRESS, ALL RIGHT! A GRAVEYARD! STILL—I'M SURE BENNIE KNEW NOTHING MORE!

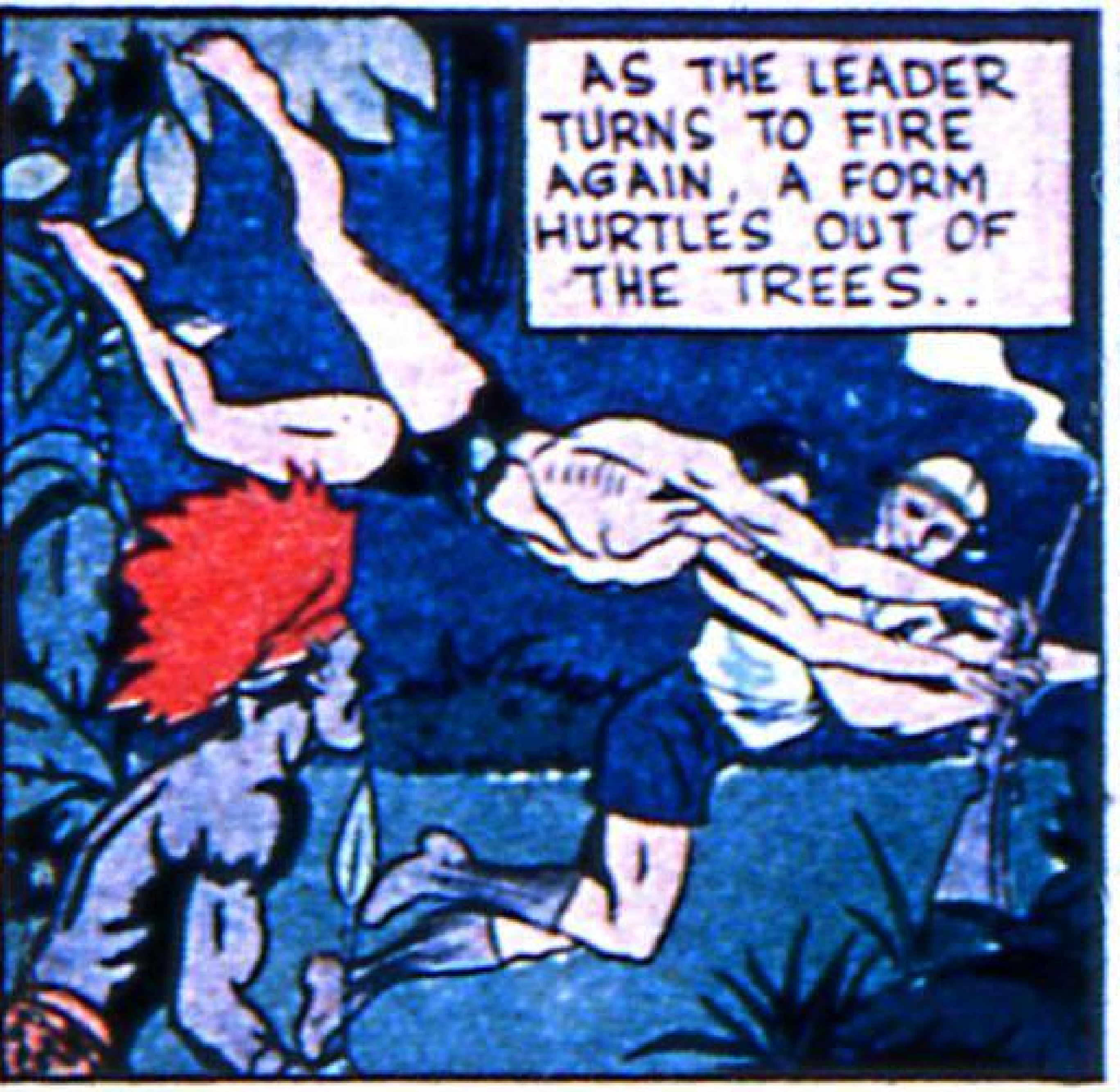

THE NEXT DAY..
NEW? I'LL SAY THERE'S SOMETHING NEW! GLORIA FRANCIS, THE HEIRESS, HAS BEEN KIDNAPPED BY THE SAME GANG! THEY WANT A HALF MILLION OR HER LIFE!
I'LL RUN OUT THERE!
OH, I'M SO FRIGHTENED! I JUST KNOW MY DAUGHTER WILL BE MURDERED!!
WE'RE STUMPED! THIS GANG IS INHUMAN!
THAT NIGHT, THE PHANTOM RE-APPEARS, AT BENNIE'S PLACE
YOU DIDN'T SQUEAL TO THE COPS.. WHAT'S YOUR GAME?
NEVER MIND THAT. I WANT TO SEE THOSE LETTERS AGAIN.. I HAVE AN IDEA!
JUST AS I THOUGHT! I HOLD THIS ENVELOPE OVER THE LIGHT AND THE WRITING ON IT IS FADING... A NEW ADDRESS IS BEGINNING TO SHOW!
THIS ENVELOPE IS ADDRESSED WITH AN INK THAT FADES IN THE LIGHT! NOW I HAVE THE REAL ADDRESS
WHY, THIS IS THE HOME OF ALVEROZ MONEZ, THE AFRICAN EXPLORER! I'LL PAY MR MONEZ A VISIT...
WHO WOULD IMAGINE UNDERGROUND CAVERNS IN THIS PLACE! AH, THERE'S A STREAK OF LIGHT!
SO, YOUR KIND MOTHER PAID OFF NICELY, BUT SHE WILL NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN! IT WOULD BE TOO RISKY!
NOT SO FAST, MONEZ!

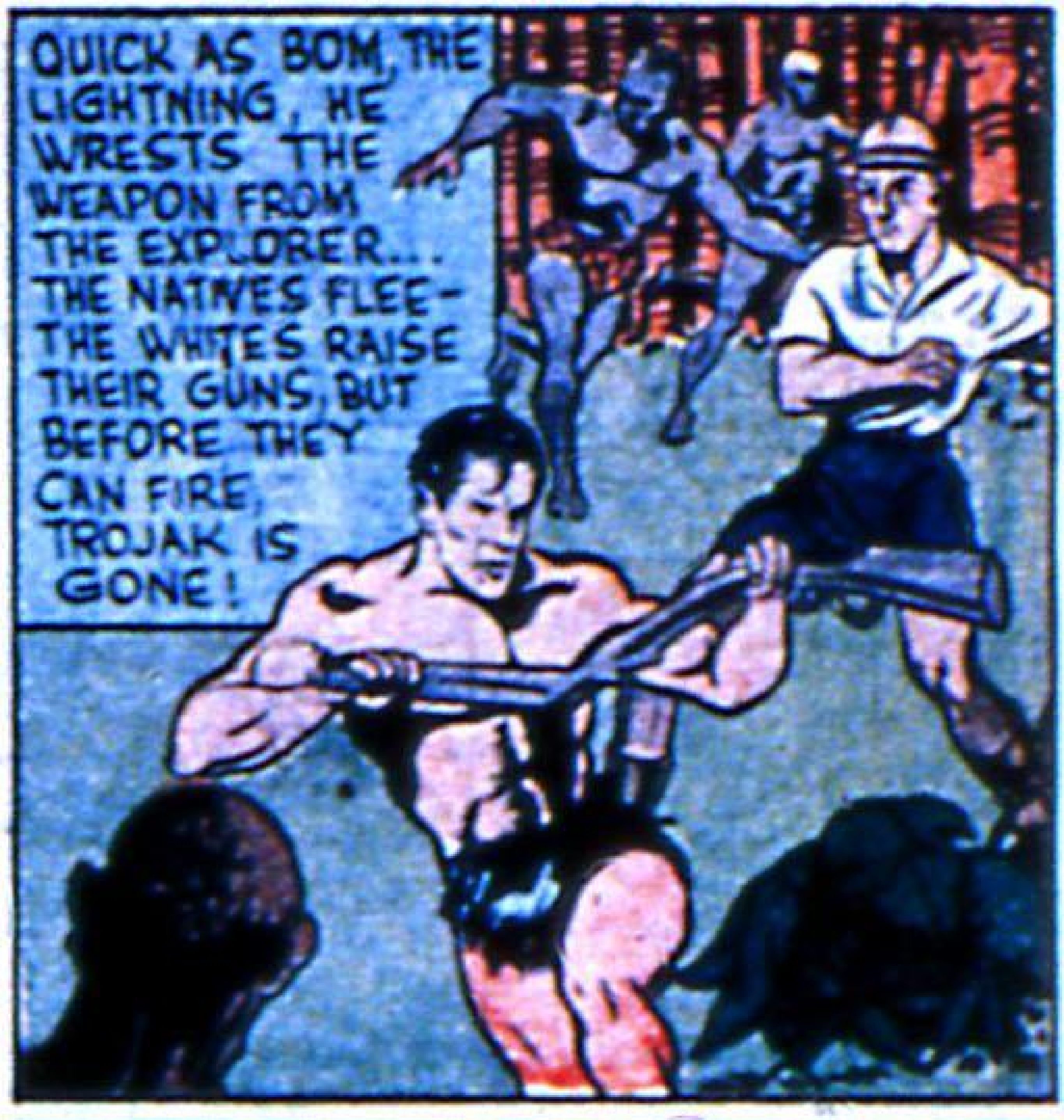

SO THESE ARE THE MYSTERY MEN! AFRICAN HEAD HUNTERS!
AS MONEZ DROPS, HE WHISTLES.. A HORDE OF SHAGGY AFRICAN HALF MEN- HALF APES CLAMBER INTO THE ROOM...
MY SMALL, BUT POTENT BAND! AFTER THEY TEAR YOU TWO APART THEY WILL CONTINUE TO AID ME IN SECURING THE WEALTH AND POWER I WANT !!!
THE FEATHERS HAD ME FOOLED! I SEE NOW THEY ARE MERELY FROM THE HEAD-DRESS OF YOUR SAVAGES, AND SEVEN TOES WHICH ENABLE THEM TO CLIMB SUPERNATURALLY.. CLEVER, MONEZ!
YOUR LAST COMPLIMENT, DESTROY HIM FIRST!
YOU'LL HAVE TO CATCH ME FIRST.. I'M GOING TO JUMP ONTO THE TREES FROM THE TOWER!
STOP, YOU FOOLS!
STOP!! THERE ARE NO TREES THERE! TOO LATE! THEY ARE DASHED TO DEATH! I'LL KILL HIM MYSELF!
TURN AROUND. IT'LL BE EASIER!
THE NEXT DAY, AT THE OFFICE OF THE BULLETIN
GREAT WORK ON THAT SCOOP, LEWIS! BEATS ME HOW YOU GOT THE STORY.. SAY.. THE POLICE ARE TRYING TO FIND THIS PHANTOM PERSON FOR QUESTIONING. ALL THEY FOUND ON THE BODY WAS A WOUND. BUT NO BULLET.. SEE WHAT YOU CAN GET ON THE PHANTOM BULLET.
SOME OTHER TIME, MAYBE, CHIEF.. I'M TAKING THE DAY OFF..

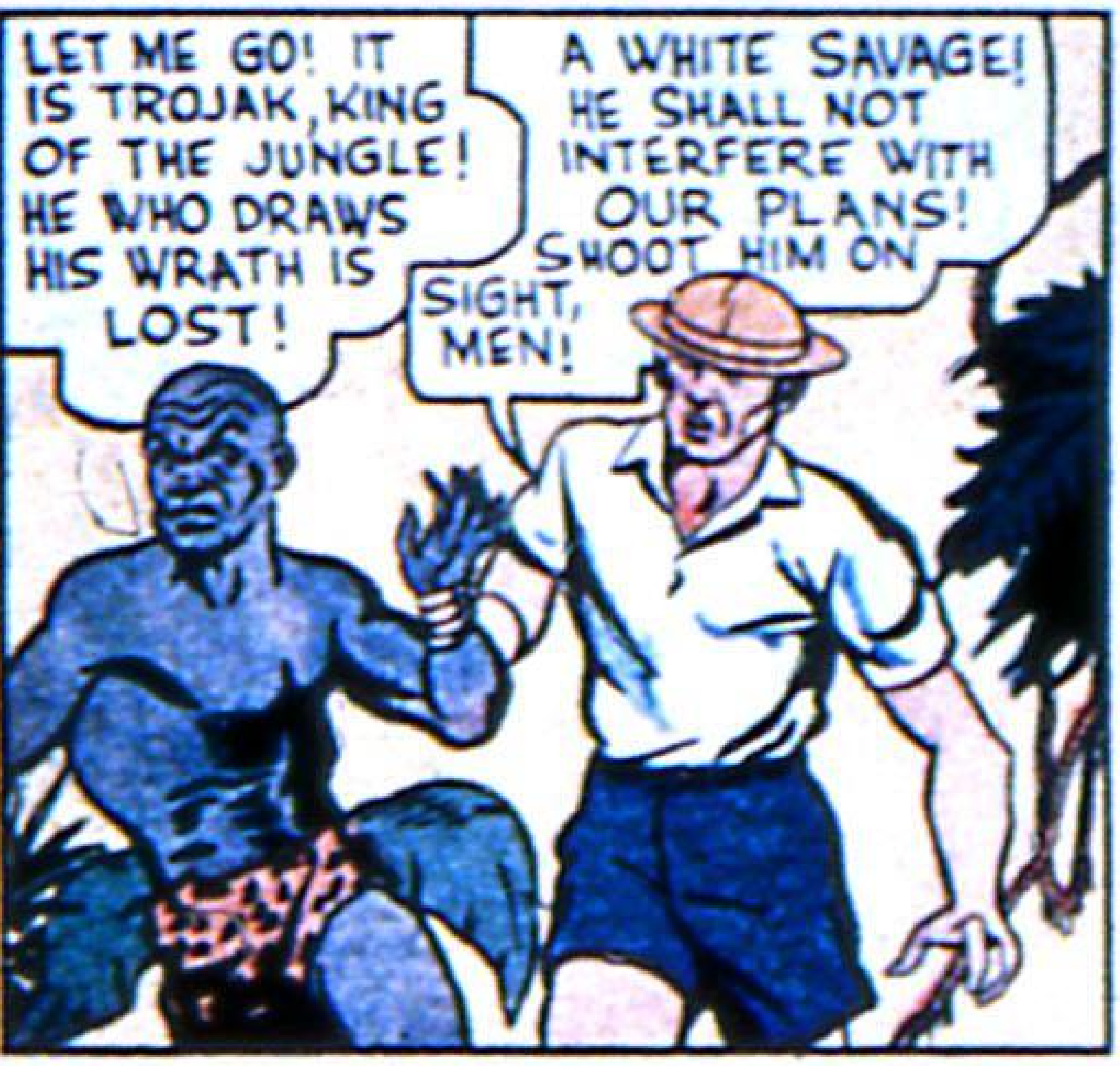

TROJAK
THE TIGER MAN
KING OF THE JUNGLE
BY GREGORY SYKES
MY SON, I HAVE CALLED YOU BEFORE ME BECAUSE I GROW OLD AND HAVE NOT MANY MOONS LONGER TO LIVE .. IT IS TIME YOU LEARNED YOUR STORY..
YOUR FATHER, WHOM YOU HAVE NEVER SEEN, WAS AN EXPLORER.. HE ONCE SAVED MY PEOPLE FROM EXTERMINATION AT THE HANDS OF A WICKED TRIBE
WHEN OUR ENEMIES SAW YOUR FATHER HAD IMPROVED OUR LIVING CONDITIONS, THEY GREW JEALOUS AND DEFIANT—
THERE IS ROOM FOR ALL TO BE HAPPY.. COME, JOIN US IN THIS BETTER LIFE.
MY PEOPLE DO NOT LIKE THE WHITE MAN'S CIVILIZATION WHICH YOU HAVE BROUGHT HERE! NO JUNGLE PEOPLE SHALL BE SUPERIOR TO MY TRIBE!!!

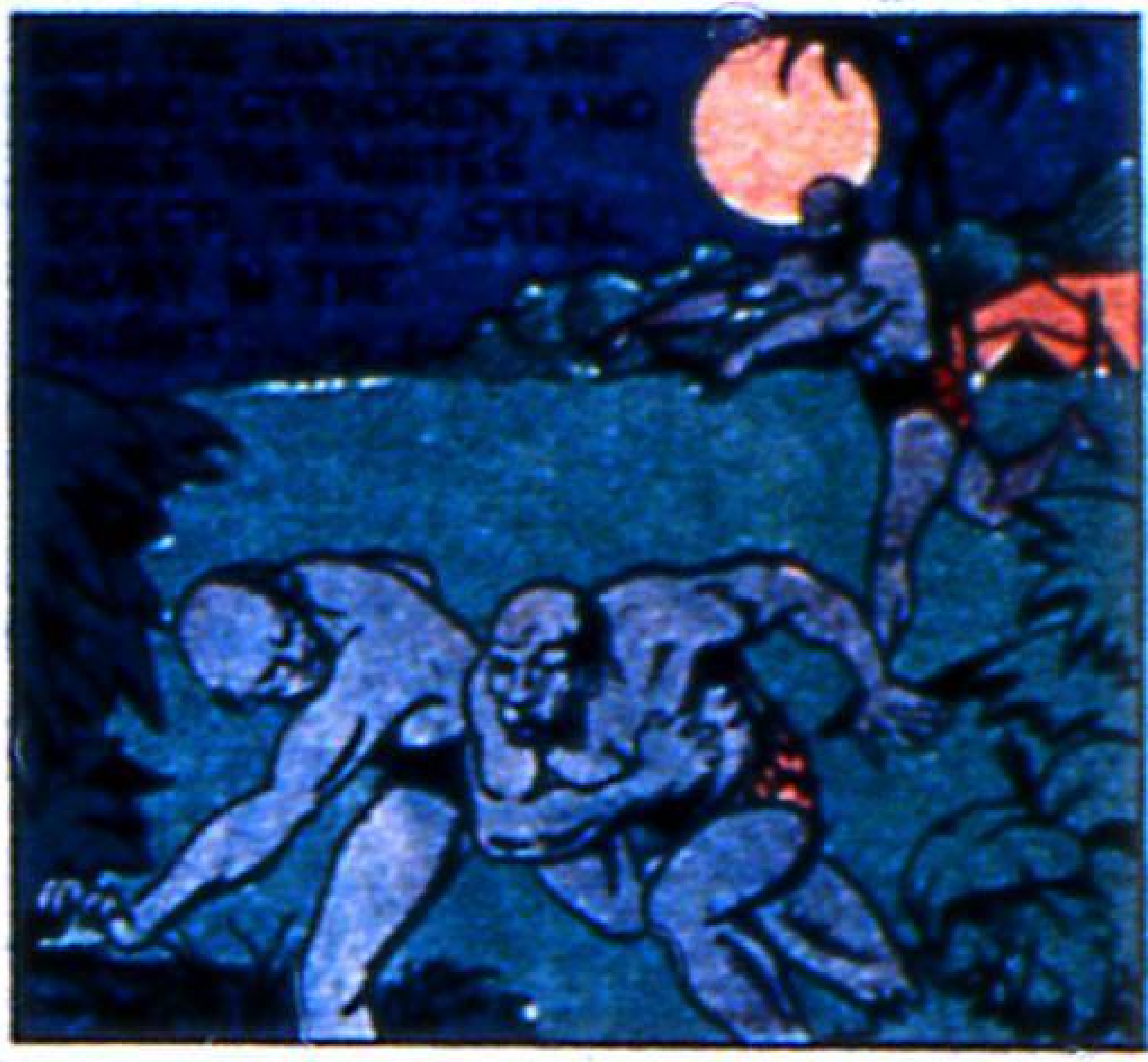

"BUT YOUR FATHER REFUSED TO ALLOW OUR PEOPLE TO BE HUMBLED... IT WAS THEN THAT THE EVIL TRIBE PROCEEDED TO FIRE OUR VILLAGE AND HARM OUR FOLLOWERS."
"AND SO YOUR BRAVE FATHER LED US TO VICTORY, BUT ALAS - HE WAS KILLED IN MIDST OF BATTLE!"
"YOU WERE BUT A BABY THEN, BUT MY PEOPLE WERE GRATEFUL- THEY RAISED YOU LIKE THEIR OWN AND HAVE LEARNED TO LOVE YOU!"
THROUGH YOUR SUPERIOR INTELLIGENCE YOU HAVE BECOME A WHITE GOD HERE.. YOU SPEAK THE LANGUAGE OF THE ANIMALS.. YOUR STRENGTH AND FEARLESSNESS HAS NEVER BEEN EQUALLED, BUT YOU ARE NEVERTHELESS A WHITE MAN.. MY CONCIENCE BIDS TELL YOU THIS-
GO FORTH AND SEEK YOUR OWN PEOPLE... IT IS YOUR DUTY!
THOUGH I LOVE IT HERE YOU SPEAK KNOWLEDGE -I GO..
AND SO TROJAK BIDS GOODBYE TO THE NATIVES AND ANIMALS HE LOVES AND SWINGS OFF THROUGH THE TREES WITH ONLY HIS FAITHFUL COMPANION, BALU, THE TIGER FOLLOWING BENEATH HIM..

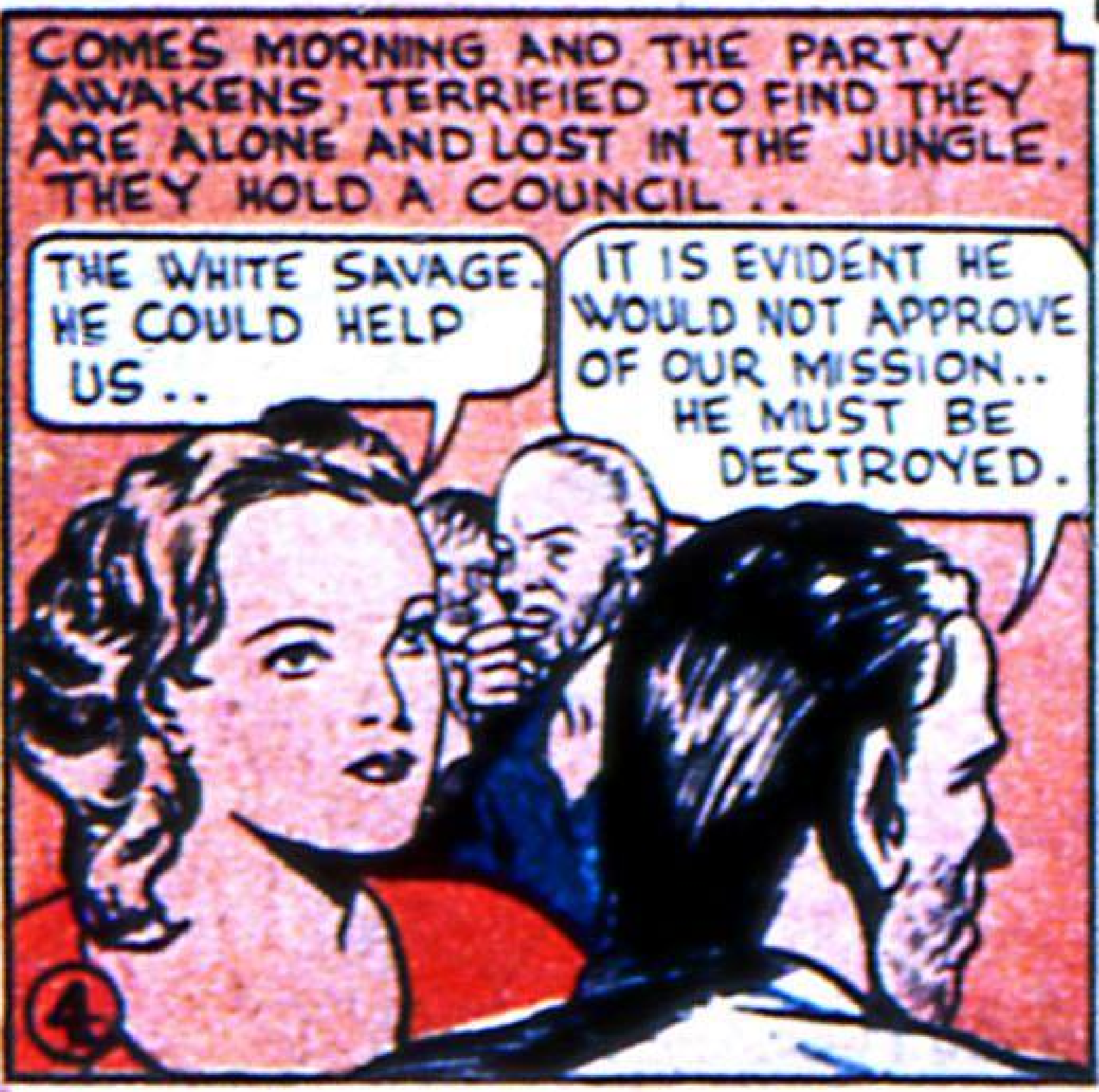

FOR MANY MOONS, HE TRAVELS.. HE PASSES OVER STRANGE, NEW COUNTRY WHERE NAME IS LITTLE MORE THAN A MYTH TO THE DENIZENS OF THIS PART OF THE JUNGLE..
SUDDENLY HE COMES TO A HALT AND SNIFFS THE AIR...
IT IS A NEW, STRANGE SCENT, IS IT NOT, BALU?
PROCEEDING WITH THE STEALTHINESS OF NOLO, THE LEOPARD, HE COMES UPON A QUEER PROCESSION.
THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO GET WORK OUT OF THESE SAVAGES! NOW, GET GOING!
THEY ARE STRANGE PALE CREATURES, MUCH LIKE THE REFLECTION I SEE IN THE TRANQUIL WATERS!
SO THESE ARE MY PEOPLE! SOMEHOW MY HEART IS NOT WITH THEM, BUT WITH THE POOR NATIVES INSTEAD!
SUDDENLY THE PARTY SIGHTS BALU, THE TIGER: THE LEADER HURRIEDLY FIRES HIS GUN.. THE BULLET GRAZES THE ANIMAL..

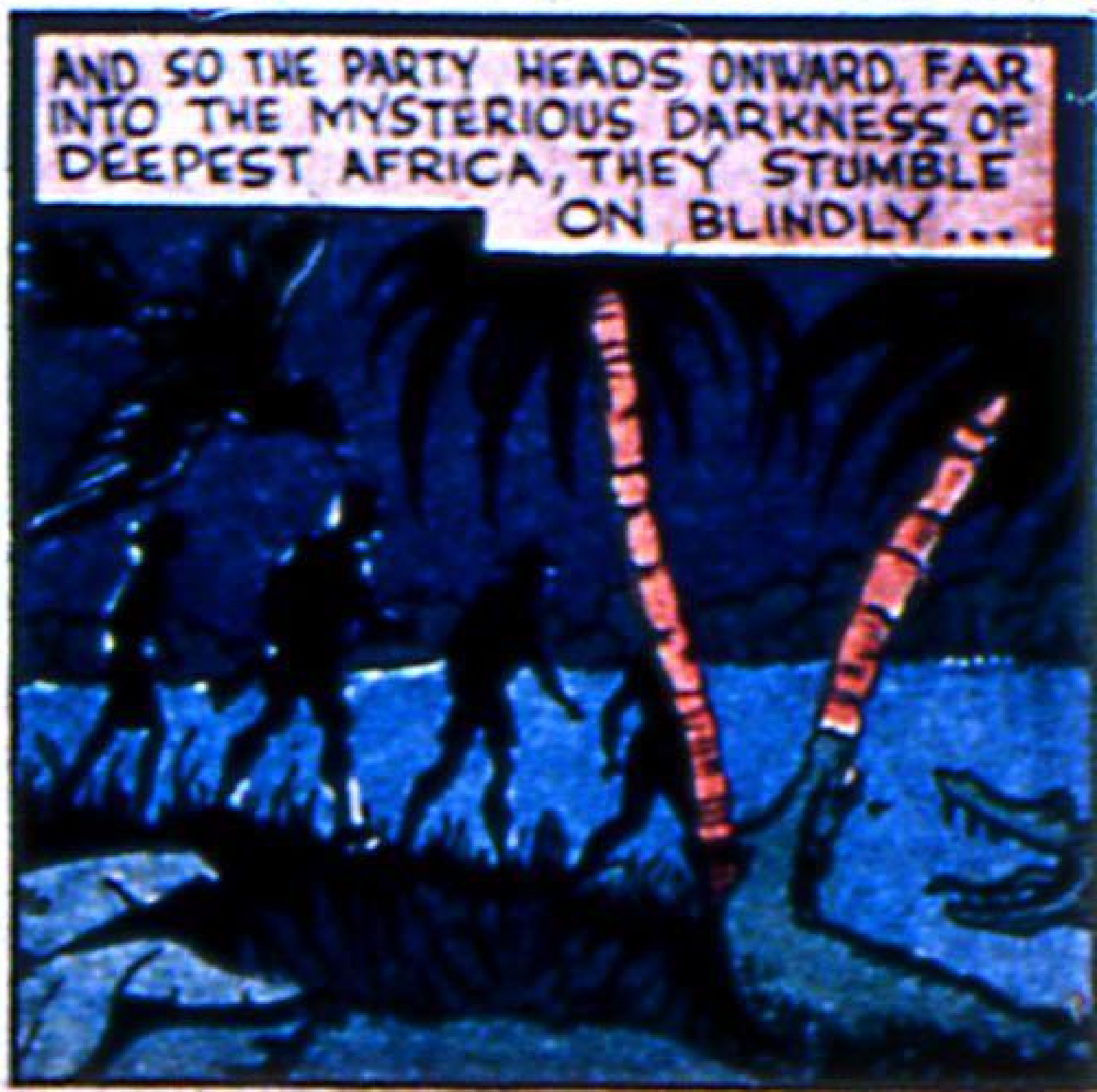

AS THE LEADER TURNS TO FIRE AGAIN, A FORM HURTLES OUT OF THE TREES..

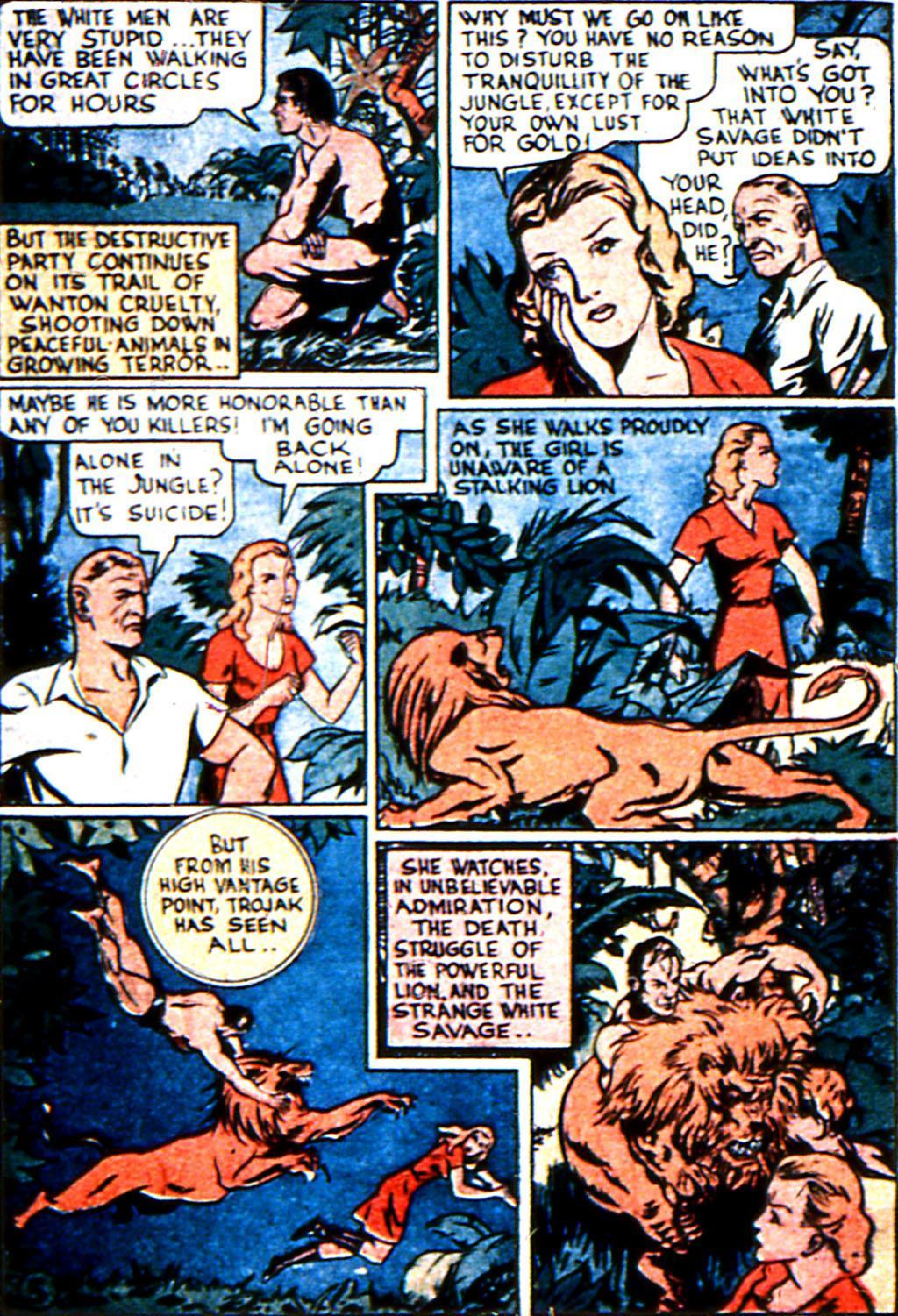

QUICK AS BOM, THE LIGHTNING, HE WRESTS THE WEAPON FROM THE EXPLORER... THE NATIVES FLEE-THE WHITES RAISE THEIR GUNS, BUT BEFORE THEY CAN FIRE, TROJAK IS GONE!

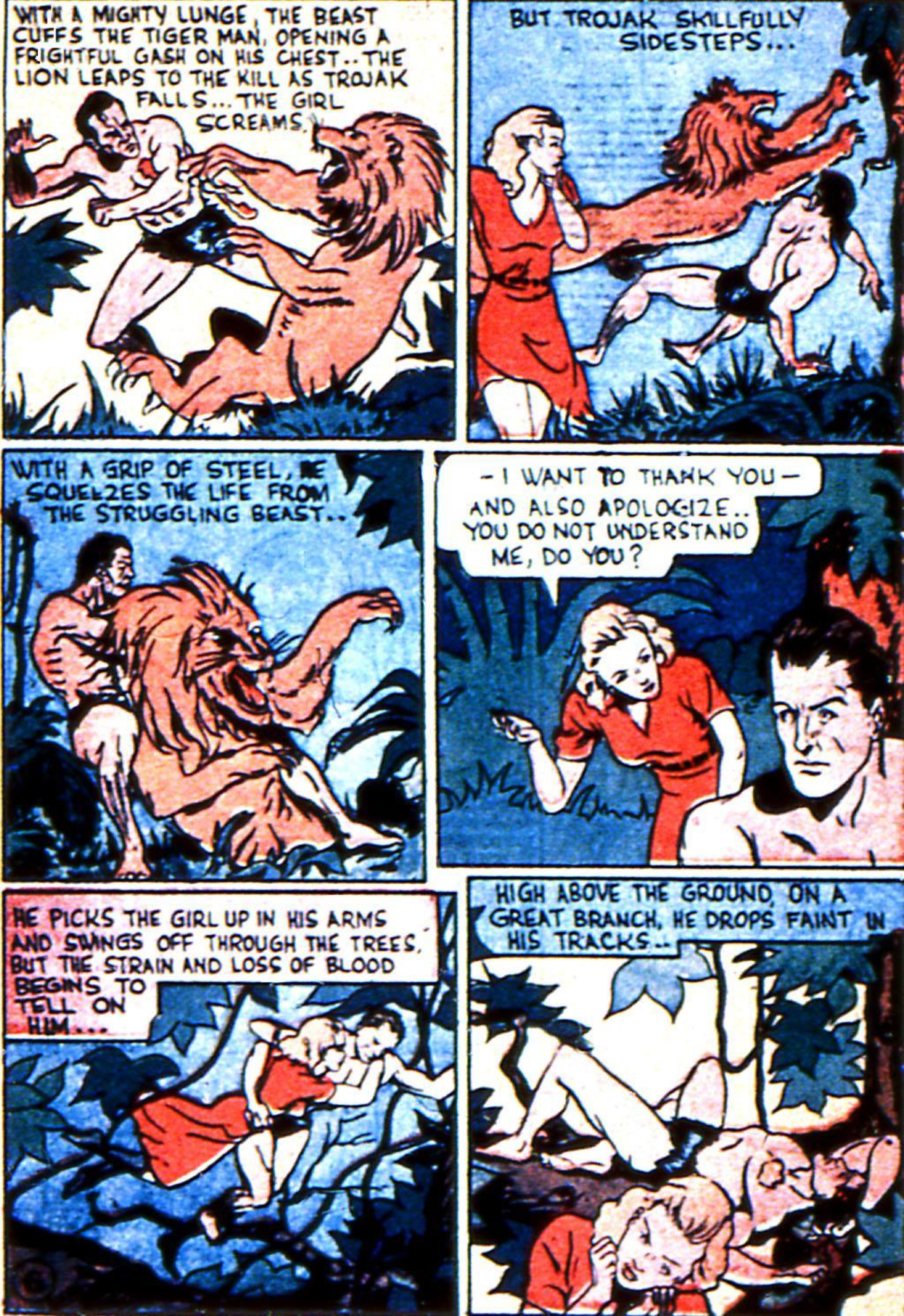

LET ME GO! IT IS TROJAK, KING OF THE JUNGLE! HE WHO DRAWS HIS WRATH IS LOST!
A WHITE SAVAGE! HE SHALL NOT INTERFERE WITH OUR PLANS! SHOOT HIM ON SIGHT, MEN!

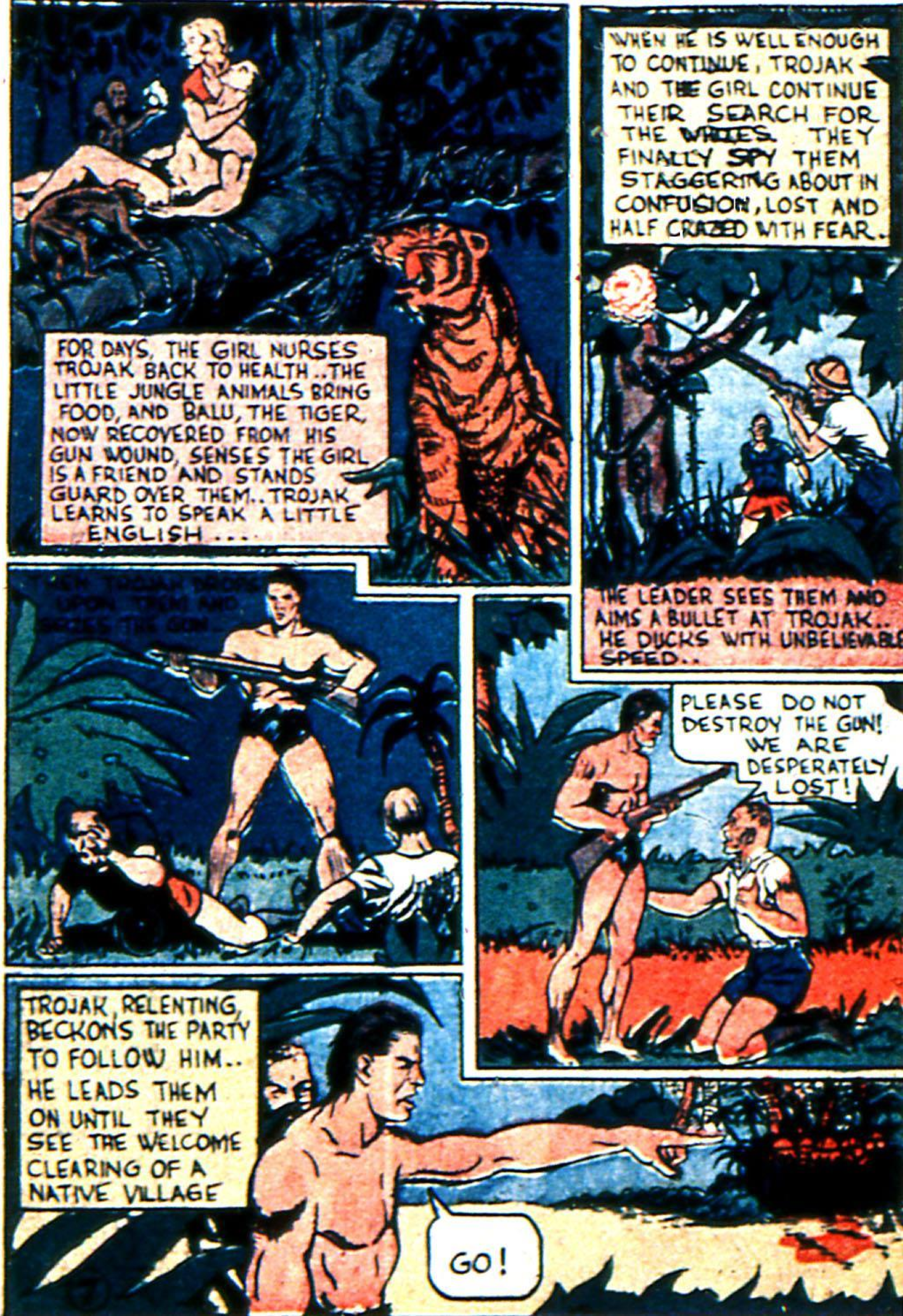

[illegible] THE NATIVES ARE [illegible] AND [illegible] THE WHITES [illegible] THEY [illegible] IN THE [illegible]

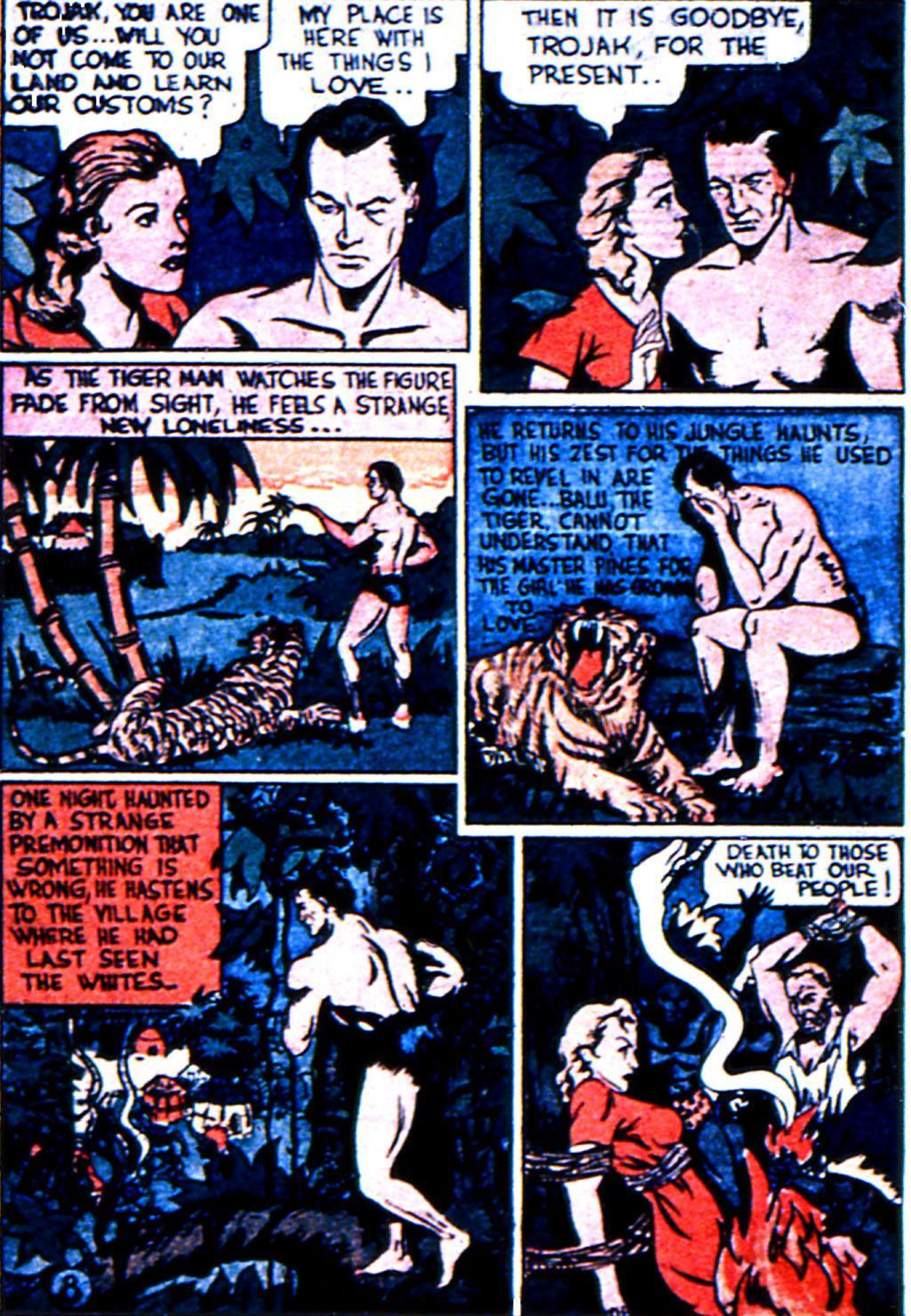

COMES MORNING AND THE PARTY AWAKENS, TERRIFIED TO FIND THEY ARE ALONE AND LOST IN THE JUNGLE. THEY HOLD A COUNCIL..
THE WHITE SAVAGE. HE COULD HELP US..
IT IS EVIDENT HE WOULD NOT APPROVE OF OUR MISSION.. HE MUST BE DESTROYED.
4

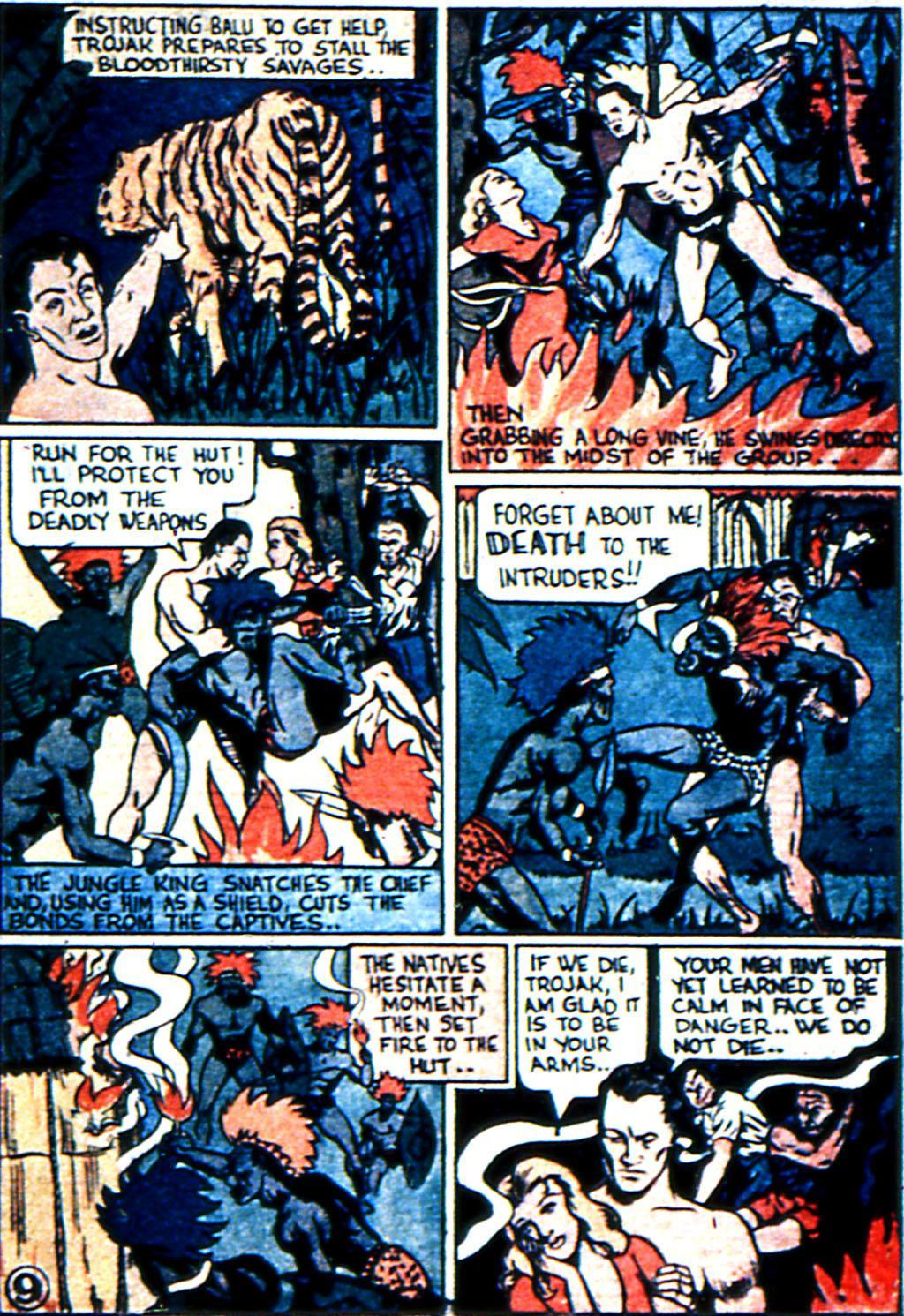

AND SO THE PARTY HEADS ONWARD, FAR INTO THE MYSTERIOUS DARKNESS OF DEEPEST AFRICA, THEY STUMBLE ON BLINDLY...

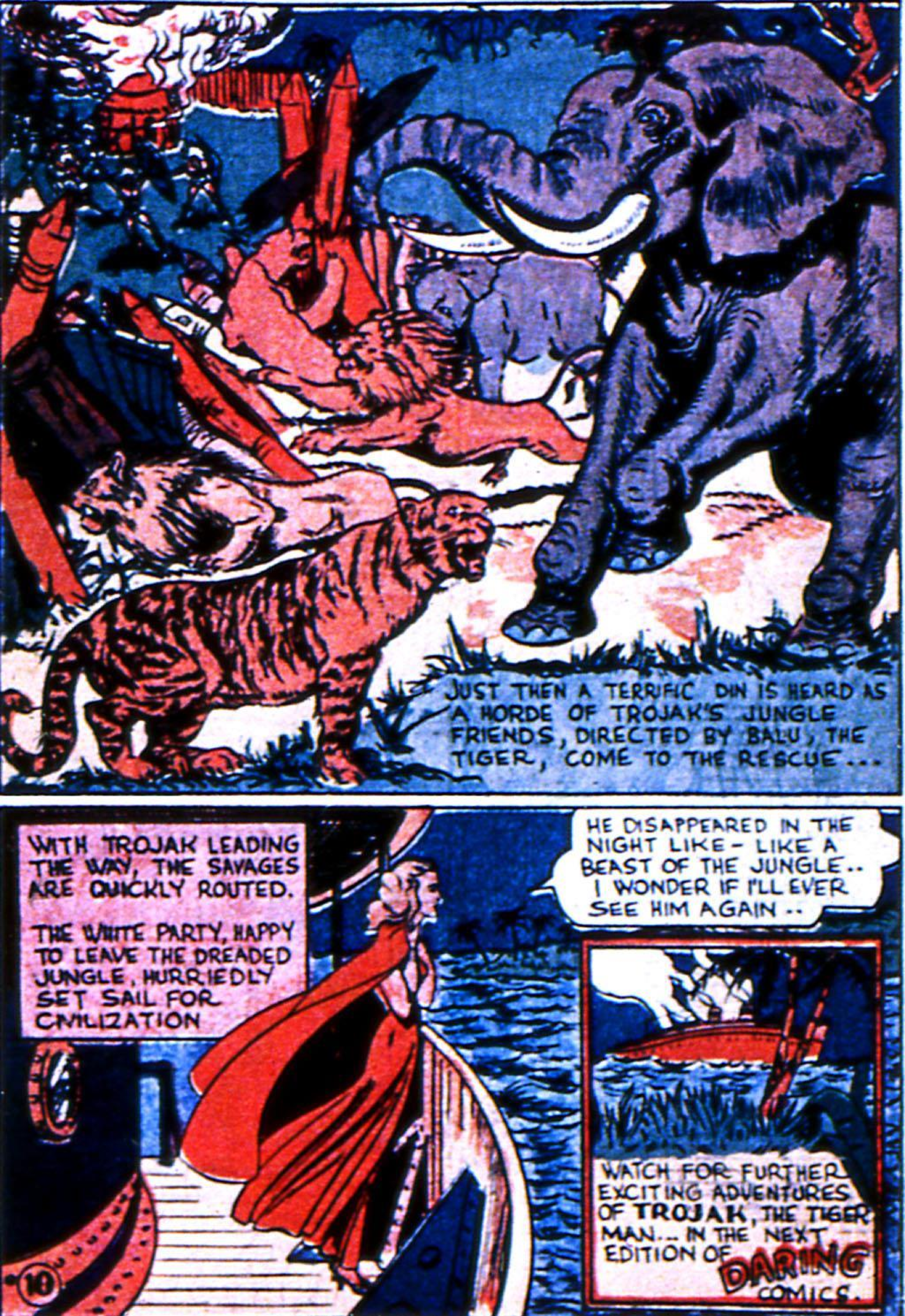

THE WHITE MEN ARE VERY STUPID ...THEY HAVE BEEN WALKING IN GREAT CIRCLES FOR HOURS
BUT THE DESTRUCTIVE PARTY CONTINUES ON ITS TRAIL OF WANTON CRUELTY, SHOOTING DOWN PEACEFUL ANIMALS IN GROWING TERROR..
WHY MUST WE GO ON LIKE THIS? YOU HAVE NO REASON TO DISTURB THE TRANQUILLITY OF THE JUNGLE, EXCEPT FOR YOUR OWN LUST FOR GOLD!
SAY, WHAT'S GOT INTO YOU? THAT WHITE SAVAGE DIDN'T PUT IDEAS INTO YOUR HEAD, DID HE?
MAYBE HE IS MORE HONORABLE THAN ANY OF YOU KILLERS! I'M GOING BACK ALONE!
ALONE IN THE JUNGLE? IT'S SUICIDE!
AS SHE WALKS PROUDLY ON, THE GIRL IS UNAWARE OF A STALKING LION
BUT FROM HIS HIGH VANTAGE POINT, TROJAK HAS SEEN ALL..
SHE WATCHES, IN UNBELIEVABLE ADMIRATION, THE DEATH STRUGGLE OF THE POWERFUL LION, AND THE STRANGE WHITE SAVAGE..


WITH A MIGHTY LUNGE, THE BEAST CUFFS THE TIGER MAN, OPENING A FRIGHTFUL GASH ON HIS CHEST.. THE LION LEAPS TO THE KILL AS TROJAK FALLS... THE GIRL SCREAMS..
BUT TROJAK SKILLFULLY SIDESTEPS...
WITH A GRIP OF STEEL, HE SQUEEZES THE LIFE FROM THE STRUGGLING BEAST..
-I WANT TO THANK YOU- AND ALSO APOLOGIZE.. YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND ME, DO YOU?
HE PICKS THE GIRL UP IN HIS ARMS AND SWINGS OFF THROUGH THE TREES. BUT THE STRAIN AND LOSS OF BLOOD BEGINS TO TELL ON HIM...
HIGH ABOVE THE GROUND, ON A GREAT BRANCH, HE DROPS FAINT IN HIS TRACKS..


FOR DAYS, THE GIRL NURSES TROJAK BACK TO HEALTH .. THE LITTLE JUNGLE ANIMALS BRING FOOD, AND BALU, THE TIGER, NOW RECOVERED FROM HIS GUN WOUND, SENSES THE GIRL IS A FRIEND AND STANDS GUARD OVER THEM.. TROJAK LEARNS TO SPEAK A LITTLE ENGLISH ...
WHEN HE IS WELL ENOUGH TO CONTINUE, TROJAK AND THE GIRL CONTINUE THEIR SEARCH FOR THE WHITES. THEY FINALLY SPY THEM STAGGERING ABOUT IN CONFUSION, LOST AND HALF CRAZED WITH FEAR.
THE LEADER SEES THEM AND AIMS A BULLET AT TROJAK.. HE DUCKS WITH UNBELIEVABLE SPEED..
THEN TROJAK DROPS UPON THEM AND SEIZES THE GUN..
PLEASE DO NOT DESTROY THE GUN! WE ARE DESPERATELY LOST!
TROJAK, RELENTING, BECKONS THE PARTY TO FOLLOW HIM.. HE LEADS THEM ON UNTIL THEY SEE THE WELCOME CLEARING OF A NATIVE VILLAGE
GO!

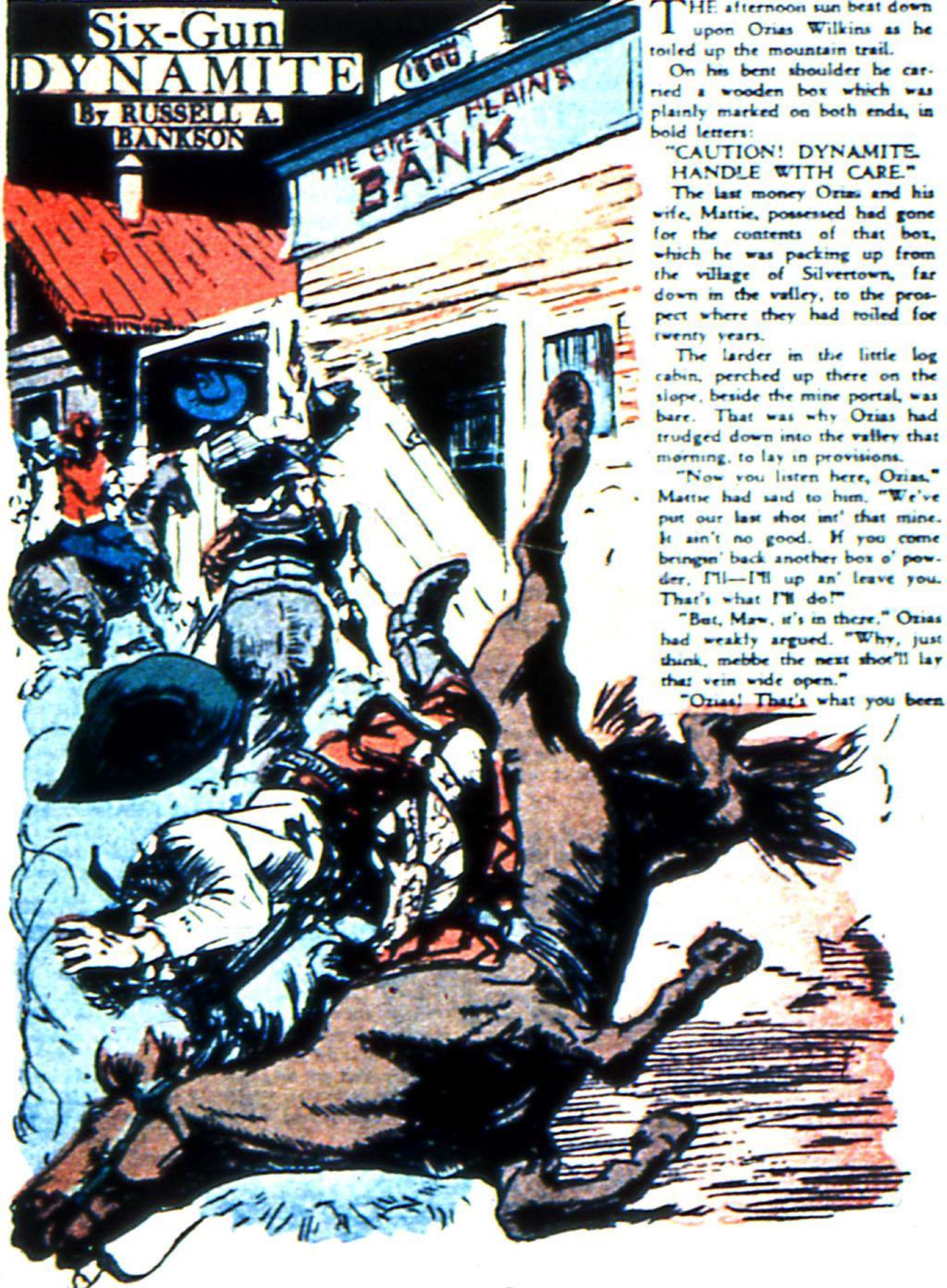

TROJAK, YOU ARE ONE OF US...WILL YOU NOT COME TO OUR LAND AND LEARN OUR CUSTOMS?
MY PLACE IS HERE WITH THE THINGS I LOVE..
THEN IT IS GOODBYE, TROJAK, FOR THE PRESENT..
AS THE TIGER MAN WATCHES THE FIGURE FADE FROM SIGHT, HE FEELS A STRANGE NEW LONELINESS...
HE RETURNS TO HIS JUNGLE HAUNTS, BUT HIS ZEST FOR THE THINGS HE USED TO REVEL IN ARE GONE...BALU, THE TIGER, CANNOT UNDERSTAND THAT HIS MASTER PINES FOR THE GIRL HE HAS GROWN TO LOVE.
ONE NIGHT, HAUNTED BY A STRANGE PREMONITION THAT SOMETHING IS WRONG, HE HASTENS TO THE VILLAGE WHERE HE HAD LAST SEEN THE WHITES..
DEATH TO THOSE WHO BEAT OUR PEOPLE!


INSTRUCTING BALU TO GET HELP, TROJAK PREPARES TO STALL THE BLOODTHIRSTY SAVAGES..
THEN GRABBING A LONG VINE, HE SWINGS DIRECTLY INTO THE MIDST OF THE GROUP...
RUN FOR THE HUT! I'LL PROTECT YOU FROM THE DEADLY WEAPONS
THE JUNGLE KING SNATCHES THE CHIEF AND, USING HIM AS A SHIELD, CUTS THE BONDS FROM THE CAPTIVES..
FORGET ABOUT ME! DEATH TO THE INTRUDERS!!
THE NATIVES HESITATE A MOMENT, THEN SET FIRE TO THE HUT..
IF WE DIE, TROJAK, I AM GLAD IT IS TO BE IN YOUR ARMS..
YOUR MEN HAVE NOT YET LEARNED TO BE CALM IN FACE OF DANGER.. WE DO NOT DIE..


JUST THEN A TERRIFIC DIN IS HEARD AS A HORDE OF TROJAK'S JUNGLE FRIENDS, DIRECTED BY BALU, THE TIGER, COME TO THE RESCUE...
WITH TROJAK LEADING THE WAY, THE SAVAGES ARE QUICKLY ROUTED.
THE WHITE PARTY, HAPPY TO LEAVE THE DREADED JUNGLE, HURRIEDLY SET SAIL FOR CIVILIZATION
HE DISAPPEARED IN THE NIGHT LIKE - LIKE A BEAST OF THE JUNGLE.. I WONDER IF I'LL EVER SEE HIM AGAIN..
WATCH FOR FURTHER EXCITING ADVENTURES OF TROJAK, THE TIGER MAN... IN THE NEXT EDITION OF DARING COMICS.
10

Six-Gun DYNAMITE

By RUSSELL A. BANKSON



THE afternoon sun beat down upon Ozias Wilkins as he toiled up the mountain trail.

On his bent shoulder he carried a wooden box which was plainly marked on both ends, in bold letters:

"CAUTION! DYNAMITE.
HANDLE WITH CARE."

The last money Ozias and his wife, Mattie, possessed had gone for the contents of that box, which he was packing up from the village of Silvertown, far down in the valley, to the prospect where they had toiled for twenty years.

The larder in the little log cabin, perched up there on the slope, beside the mine portal, was bare. That was why Ozias had trudged down into the valley that morning, to lay in provisions.

"Now you listen here, Ozias," Mattie had said to him. "We've put our last shot int' that mine. It ain't no good. If you come bringin' back another box o' powder, I'll—I'll up an' leave you. That's what I'll do!"

"But, Maw, it's in there," Ozias had weakly argued. "Why, just think, mebbe the next shot'll lay that vein wide open."

"Ozias! That's what you been

sayin' fer twenty year, while we live on pork an' beans. The next shot! You bring back some grub, or I'm leavin'!"

"All right, Maw," Ozias had promised.

There was excitement in Silvertown when he got there. The day before there had been a big bank robbery up in the city. Two gangsters had killed a cashier and escaped with fifty thousand dollars. In their get-away, they had come up through the mountains, and on the grade above Silvertown, their car had been wrecked. The pair had taken to the hills on foot, carrying their loot.

State police were forming posses to surround them, and half of the population was joining in the manhunt, in the hopes of sharing the ten thousand dollar reward for the capture of the desperadoes. Ozias listened to the talk, and wished he were younger. Then he thought about the mine, and got into an argument with himself, over keeping his promise to Mattie.

"She'd be powerful mad," he temporized. "Only if'n I was t' make one more shot, an' there was the vein, all shinin' with silver, she'd git over it quick 'nough."

Later he said: "I got a notion t' see if'n she'd up an' leave. I bet she'd stay an' see what that last shot'ud bring."

He was still arguing like this when he went over to the general store and had a talk with Silas Potter, the storekeeper. When he left, to start back up the trail to the cabin, the heavy box rested squarely on his stooped shoulders.

"I bet she won't," he prophesied. But doubts were growing upon him, the nearer he came to the cabin. Mattie was a determined woman, sometimes.

On the bench below the cabin, he saw the marks of two men's shoes in the dust, and knew they weren't made by miners' boots. Quick alarm seized him. They were heading up the trail toward the cabin! And Mattie was there alone!

The last pitch he took on the run. He came up over the hump, and there was the cabin, and over to the side was the mine portal. And best of all, there was Mattie, standing in the cabin door, like a Nemesis, waiting for him, her eyes fixed upon that box on his shoulder.

"Maw!" he gasped. "You all right?"

"An' why shouldn't I be?" Mattie flung back coldly, her eyes never leaving the box. "So you went an' done it, Paw! Well, that's the end. I told you it would be the last time!"

She tied her sunbonnet firmly over her greying hair, and picked up a satchel which she had already packed.

"I was expectin' what'ud happen," she said steadily. "I was all set t' leave." She stepped into the trail.

"Lissen, Maw!" Ozias pleaded. "They's a coupla murderers here'bouts! I seen their footprints in the trail, down on the bench."

Mattie stopped short, staring.

"Look, Paw!" she said.

Ozias half turned. Two men were coming out of the mine portal. They carried black satchels in their left hands, and guns in their right hands.

"Don't move!" one of them rasped.

"Fix some food, old woman!" the smaller man ordered. "And you, Grandpa, drop that box and put your hands above your head!"

"Paw!" Mattie choked. "They'll kill you!"

Ozias said: "It don't make much difference, seein' you're gonna leave me an'—an' the mine, Maw."

Ozias straightened his shoulders and turned squarely around so he faced the two killers.

"Look at this box!" he said.

The desperadoes riveted their eyes upon it—and stopped.

"Dynamite! Handle with care!"

Ozias gave them a moment to let this sink in. He said: "A box o' powder this big'll kill every livin' thing fer three hundred yards."

"Set it down!", the bandit rasped.

"If'n you was t' shoot me, it'ud go off when I fell," Ozias said.

"SET IT DOWN!"

Ozias was stubborn. "Not less'n both o' you throw your guns away!"

"It will kill you, too," the gangster countered.

"Maw an' me ain't got much t' live fer," Ozias said. "Drop your guns!"

The two stared at the box.

"DYNAMITE! HANDLE WITH CARE!"

The smaller of the pair let his gun slip. Ozias raised the box threateningly, and the larger outlaw followed suit.

"Maw!" Ozias spoke without taking his eyes from the two killers. "Git that pulley rope in the shed."

Mattie set her satchel down and got the rope. "Now," Ozias went on, "you fellers stretch out on your stummicks. An' hurry. This box is danged heavy!"

They obeyed. Mattie bound their hands behind their backs, and their ankles together. Then Ozias set the box down on the stoop, and dragged the sullen pair into the tool shed, anchoring them securely to posts at opposite ends.

"Paw," Mattie said, coming toward him, her eyes shining. "I never wouldda left. I was only a-scarin' you."

"Some o' the posse'll be along, lookin' fer them fellers," Ozias said. "Best stir up some grub, so's we can go with 'em, an' collect that reward. It'll be enough t' open the mine, Maw. Why, mebbe the next shot'll do it!"

"We ain't got no grub, Paw," Mattie said meekly.

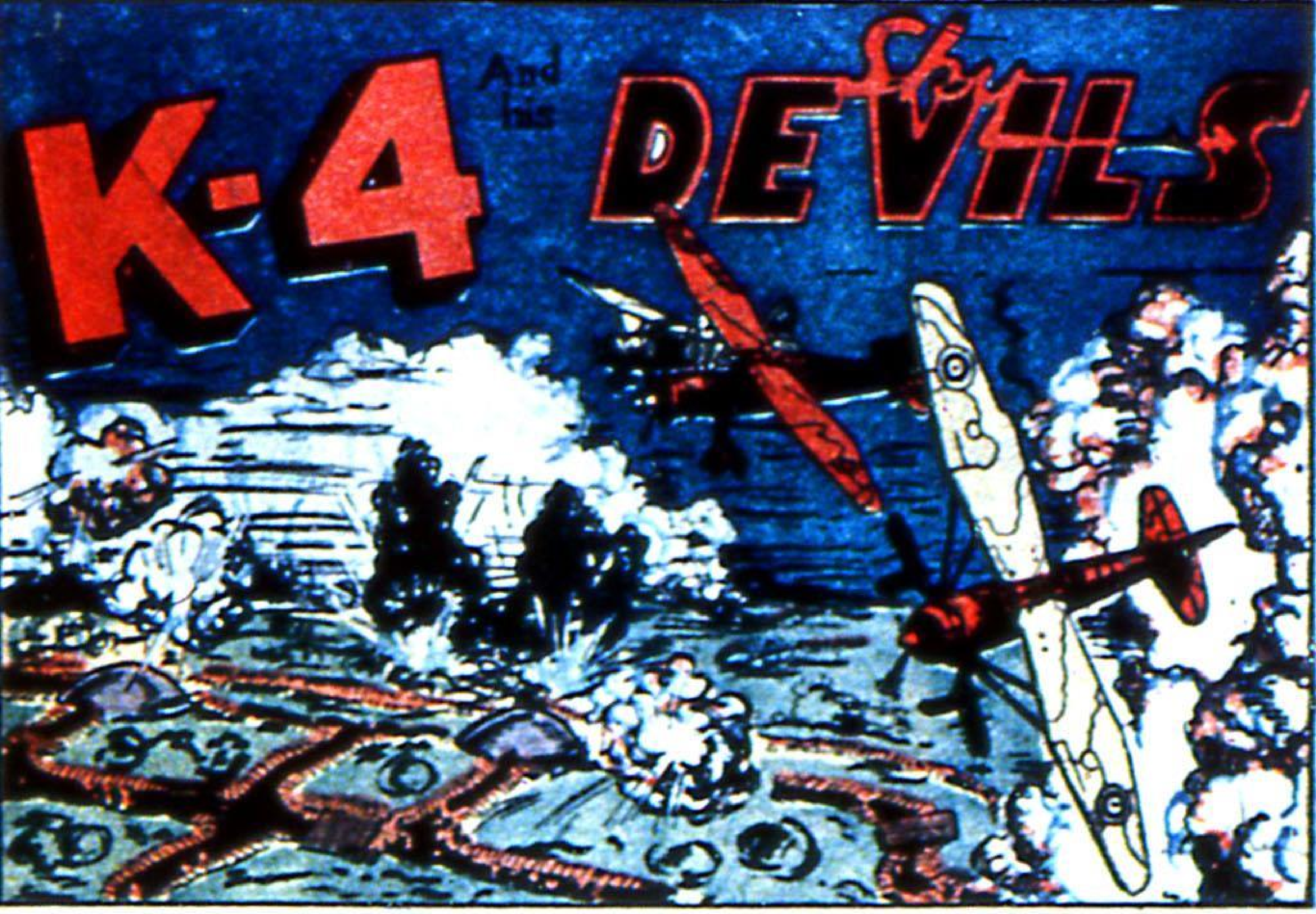
Ozias picked up a hammer and bashed in the top of the box he had carried so carefully up the steep trail.

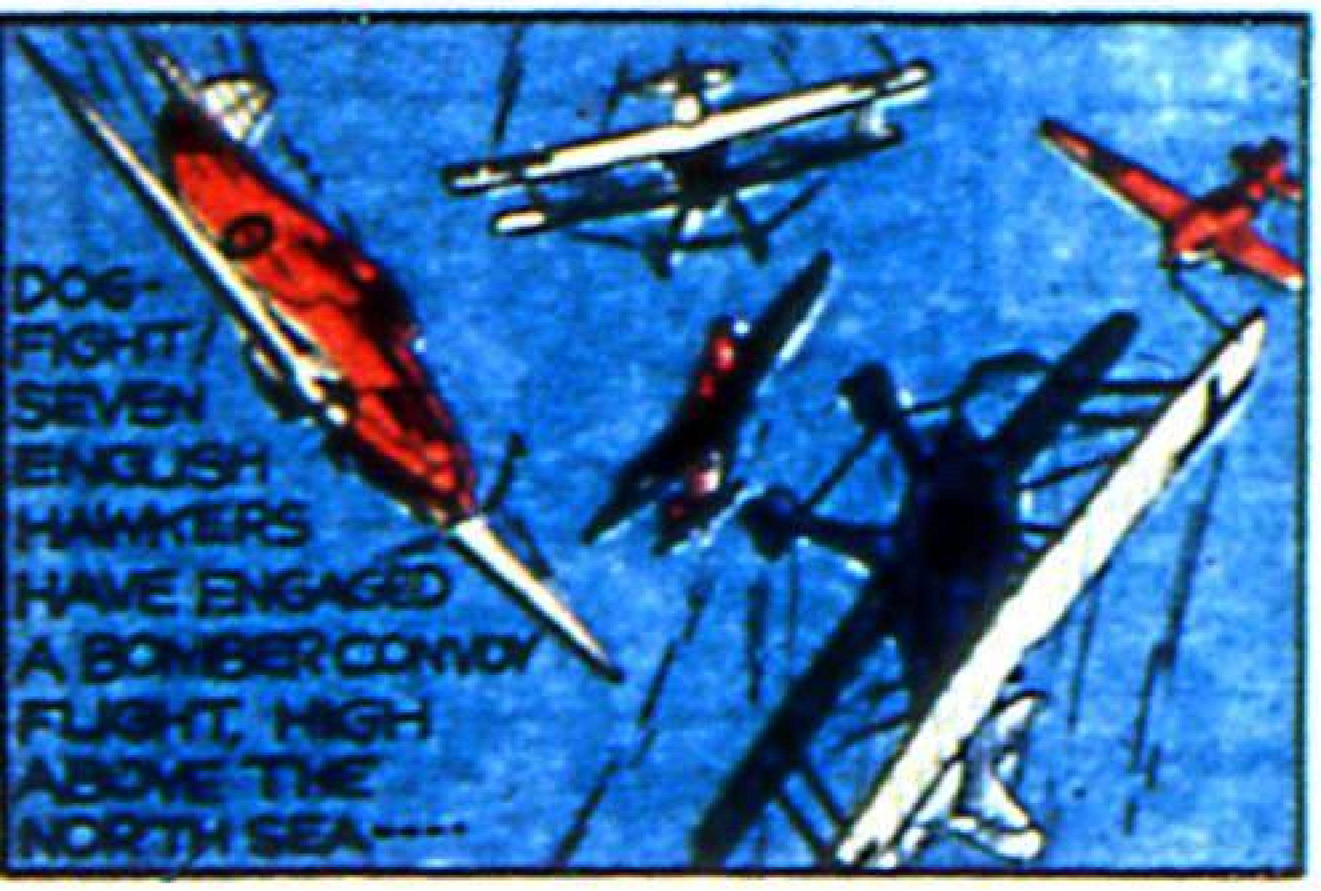
"Look out, Paw!" Mattie warned. "You're right careless."

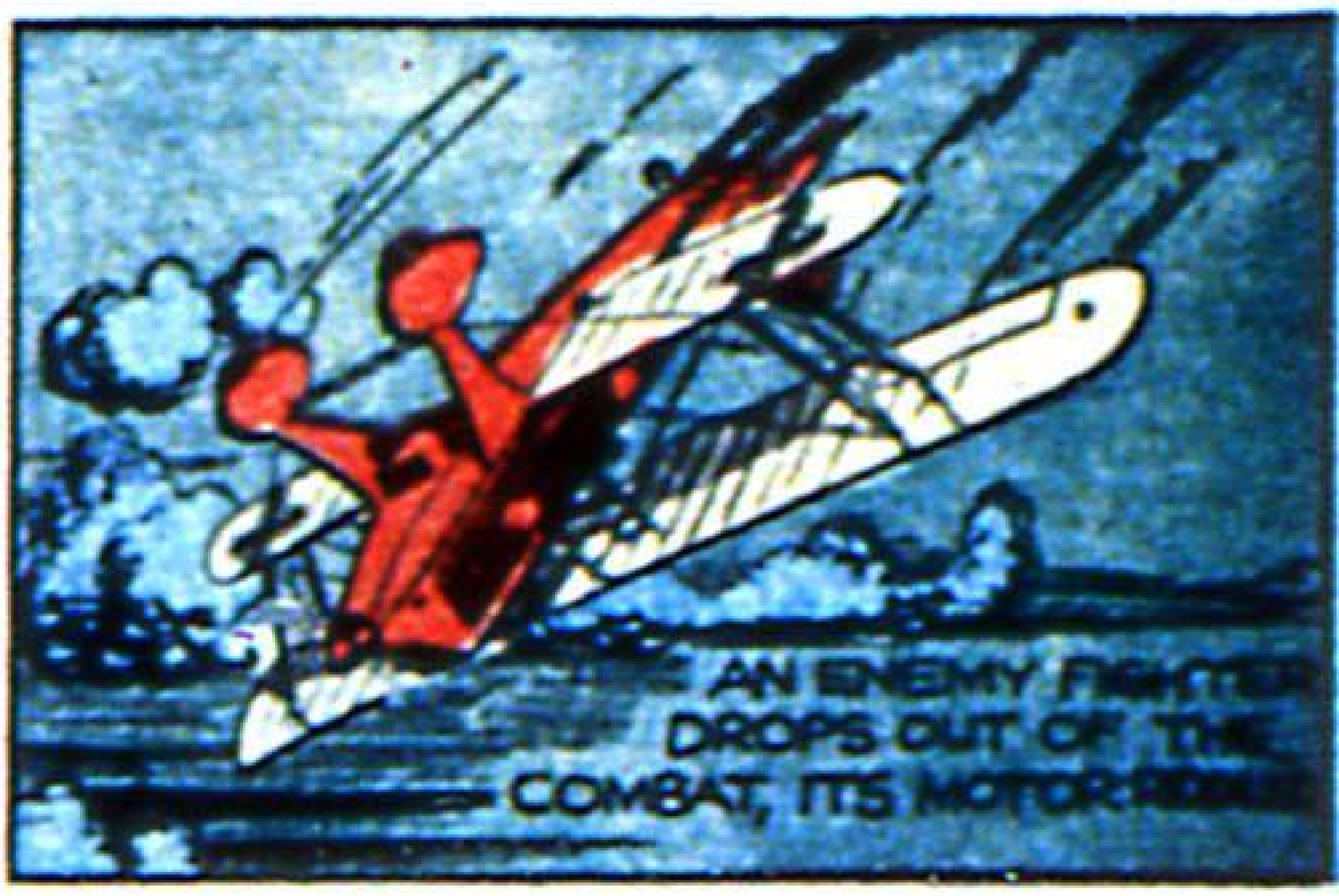
"Shucks, Maw," Ozias chuckled. "Me an' Silas Potter packed the grub in this dynamite box, jest so's I could see if'n you meant what you said!"

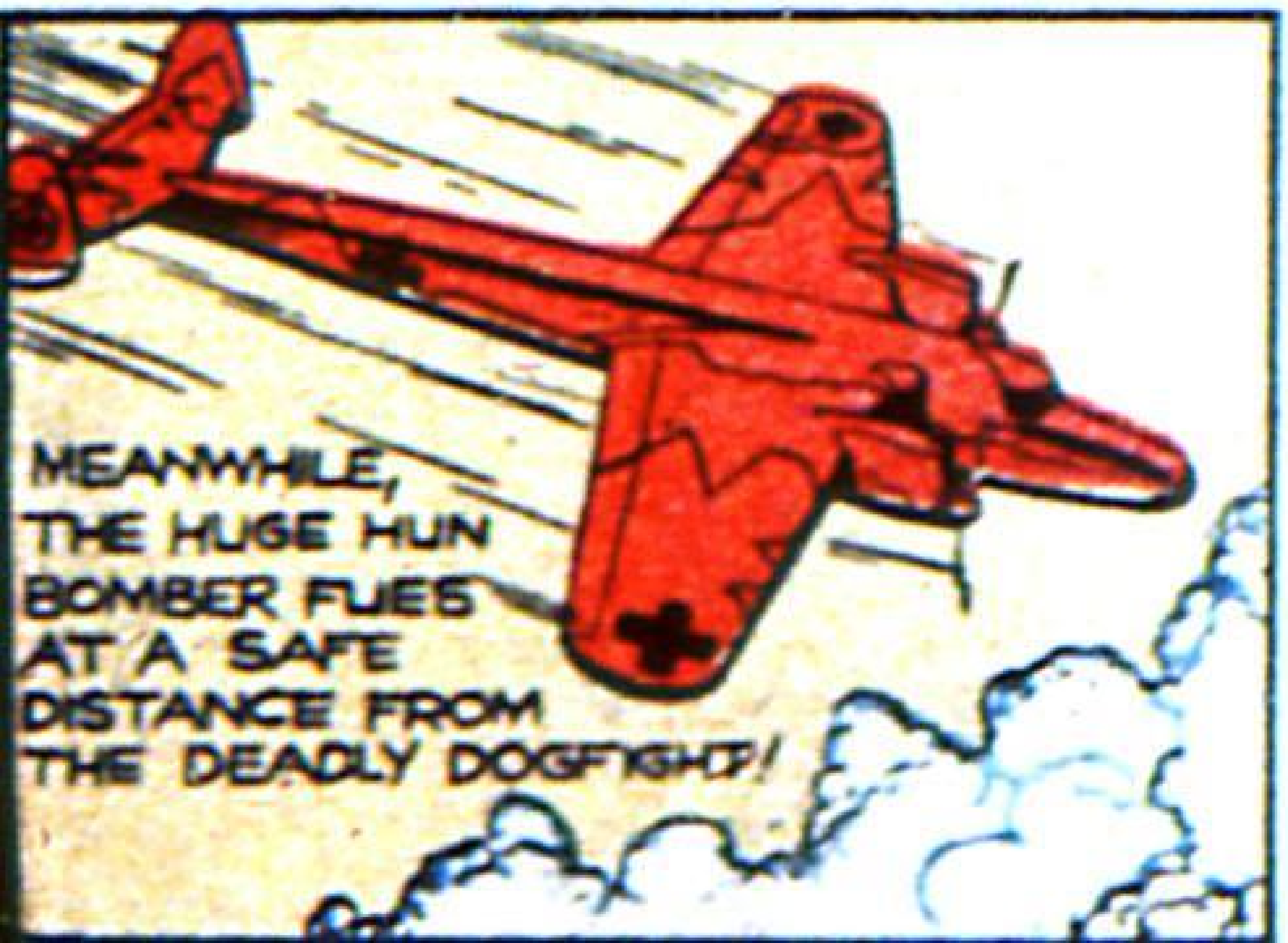
● THE END ●

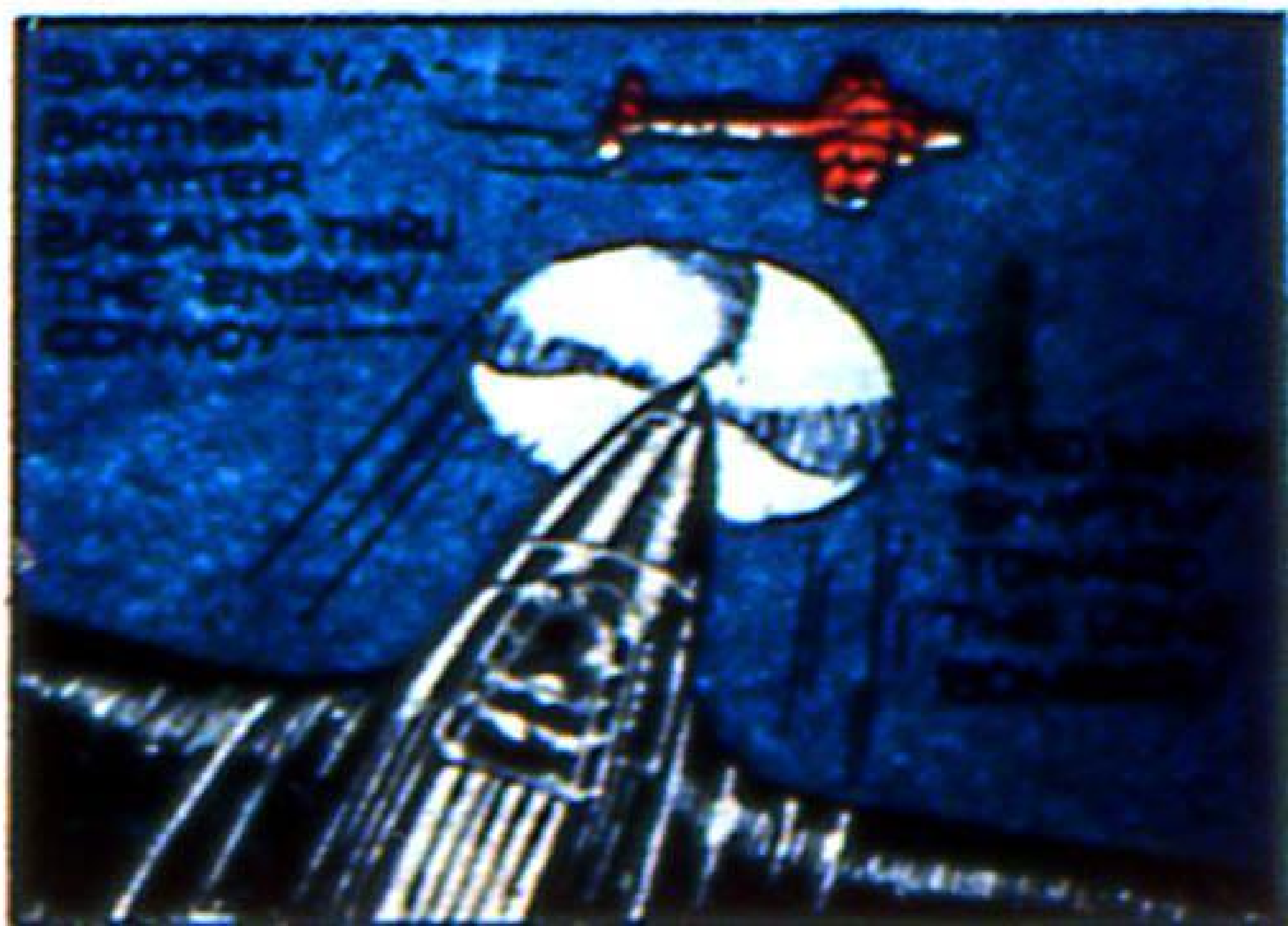
K-4 And his Sky DEVILS

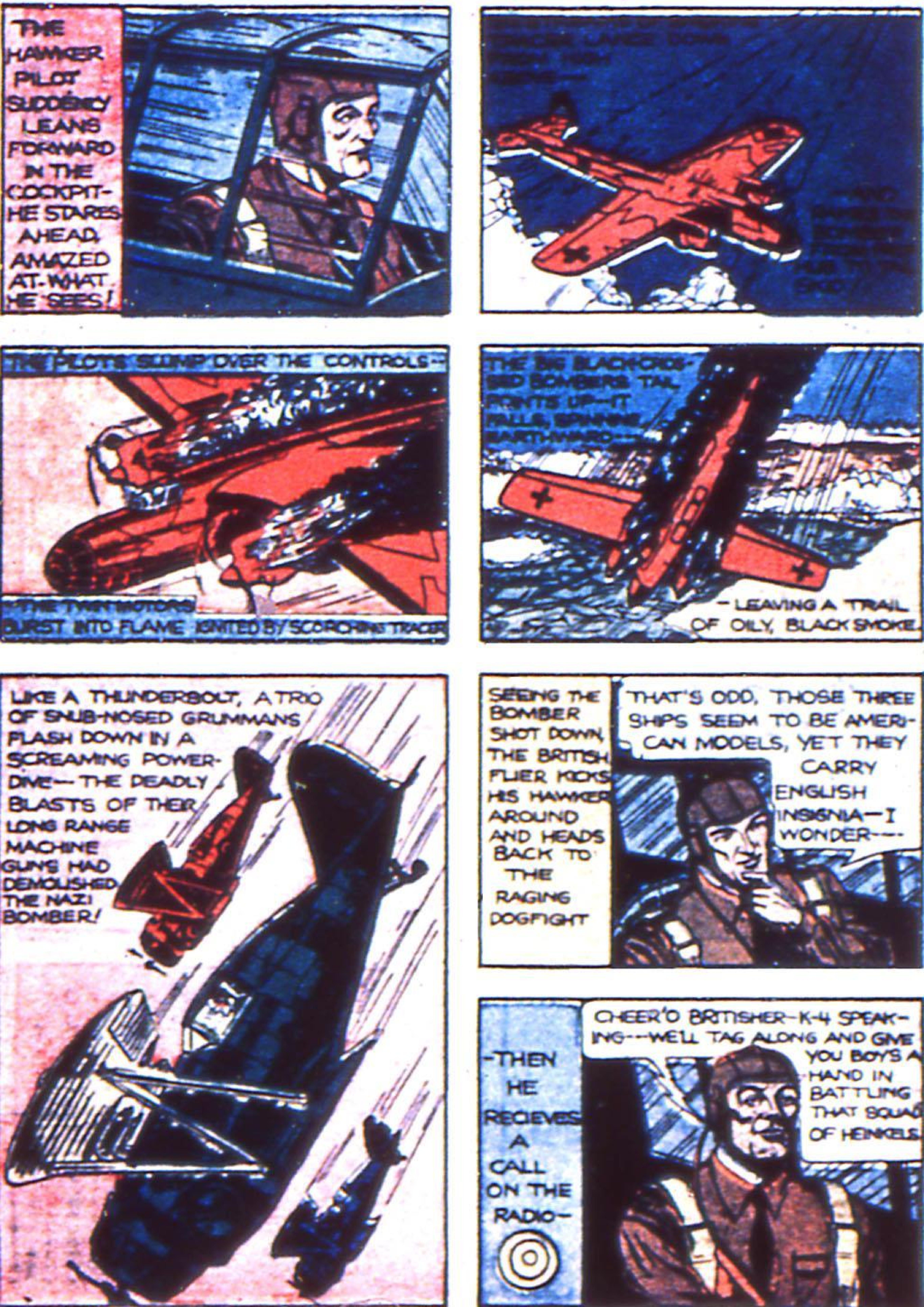


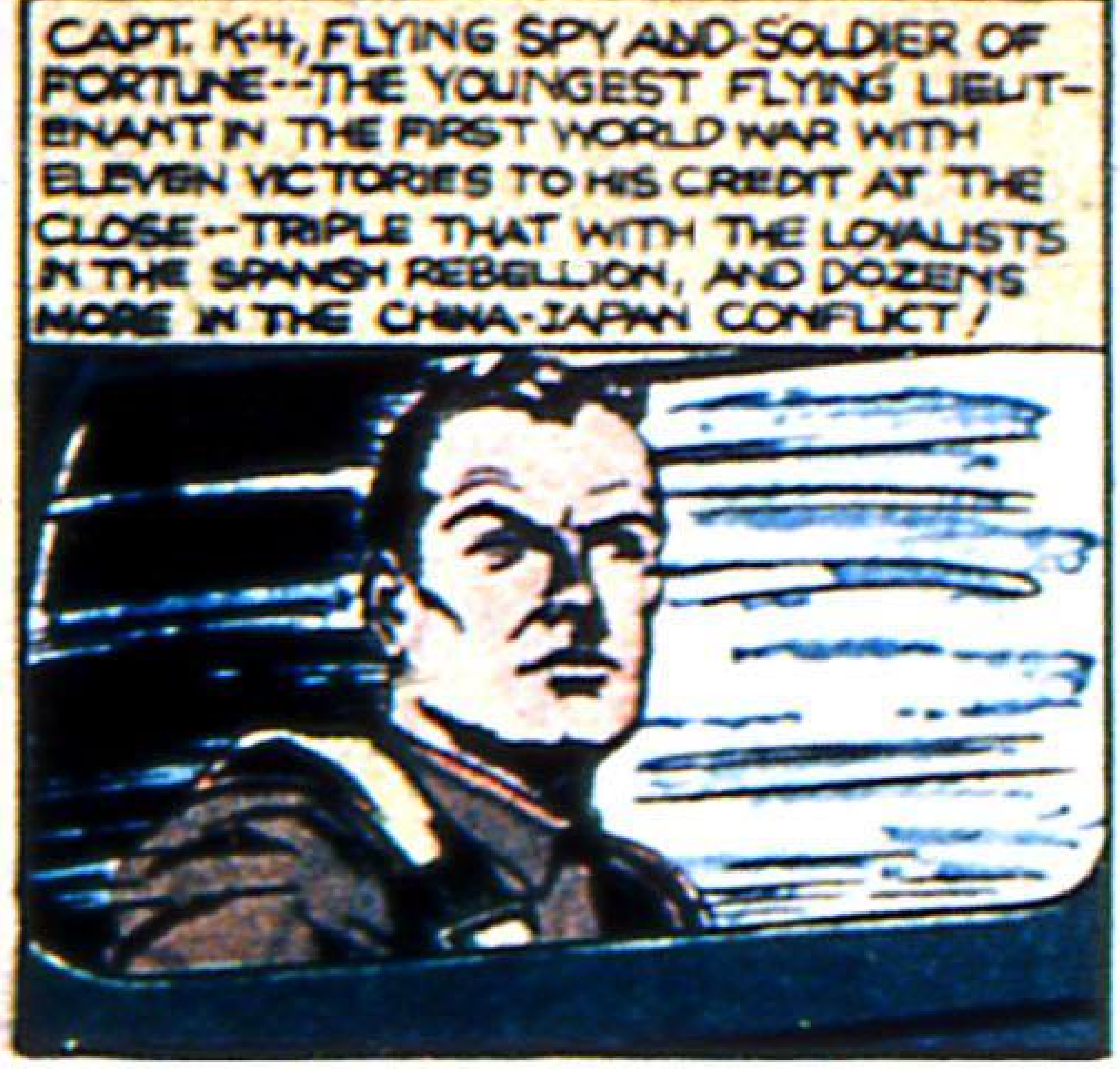

DOG-FIGHT! SEVEN ENGLISH HAWKERS HAVE ENGAGED A BOMBER CONVOY FLIGHT, HIGH ABOVE THE NORTH SEA----

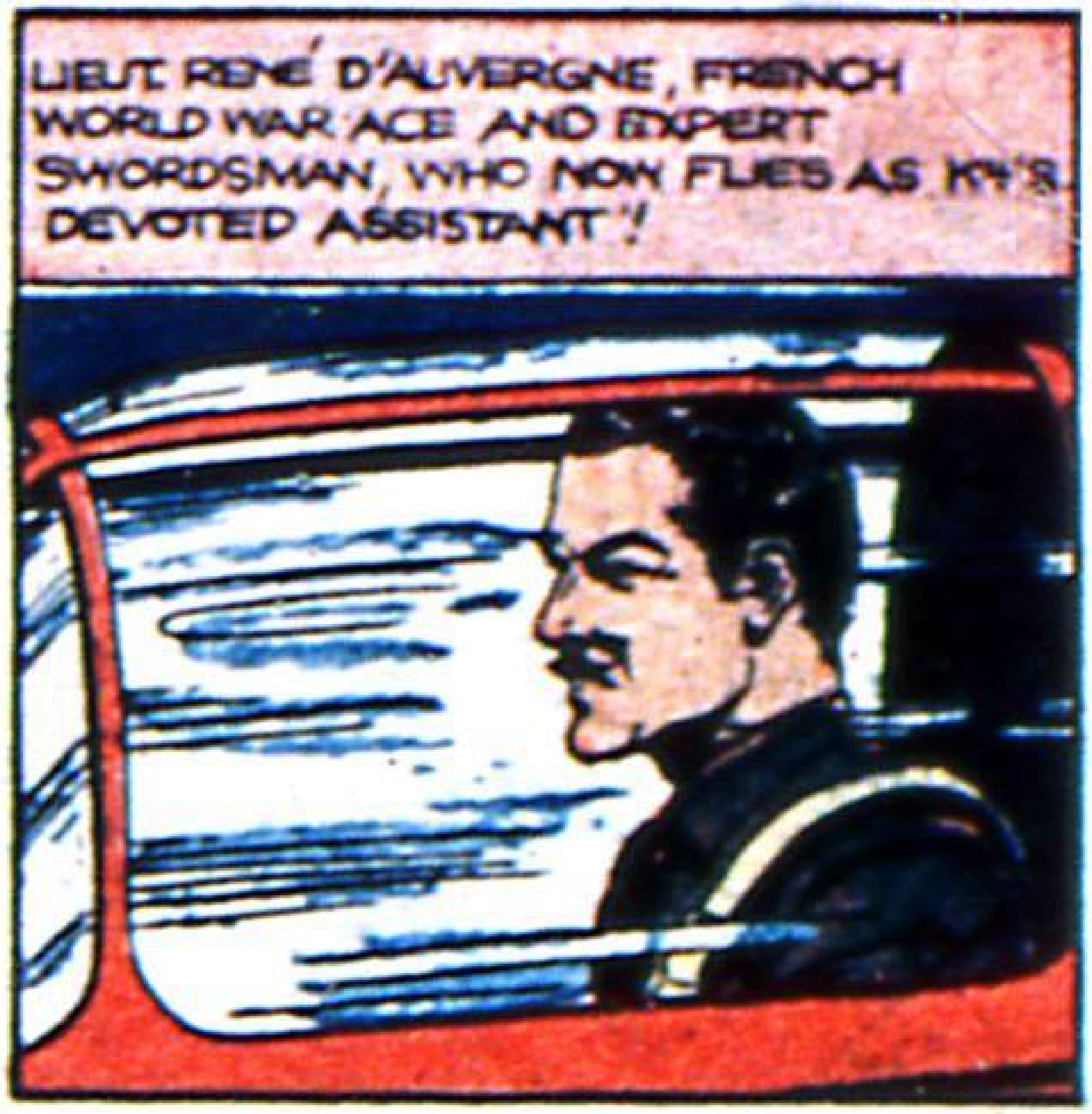

AN ENEMY FIGHTER DROPS OUT OF THE COMBAT, ITS MOTOR

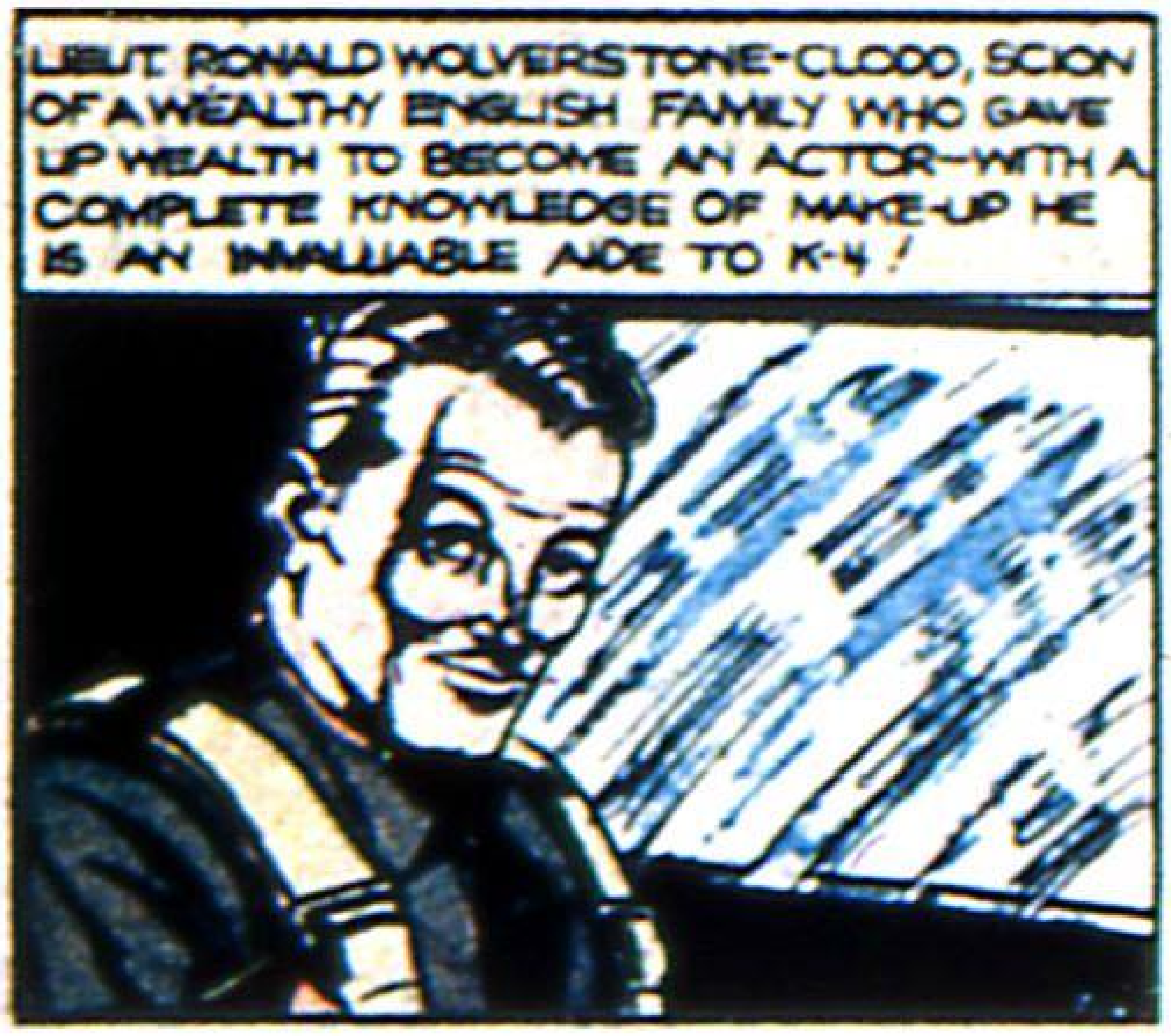

MEANWHILE, THE HUGE HUN BOMBER FLIES AT A SAFE DISTANCE FROM THE DEADLY DOGFIGHT!

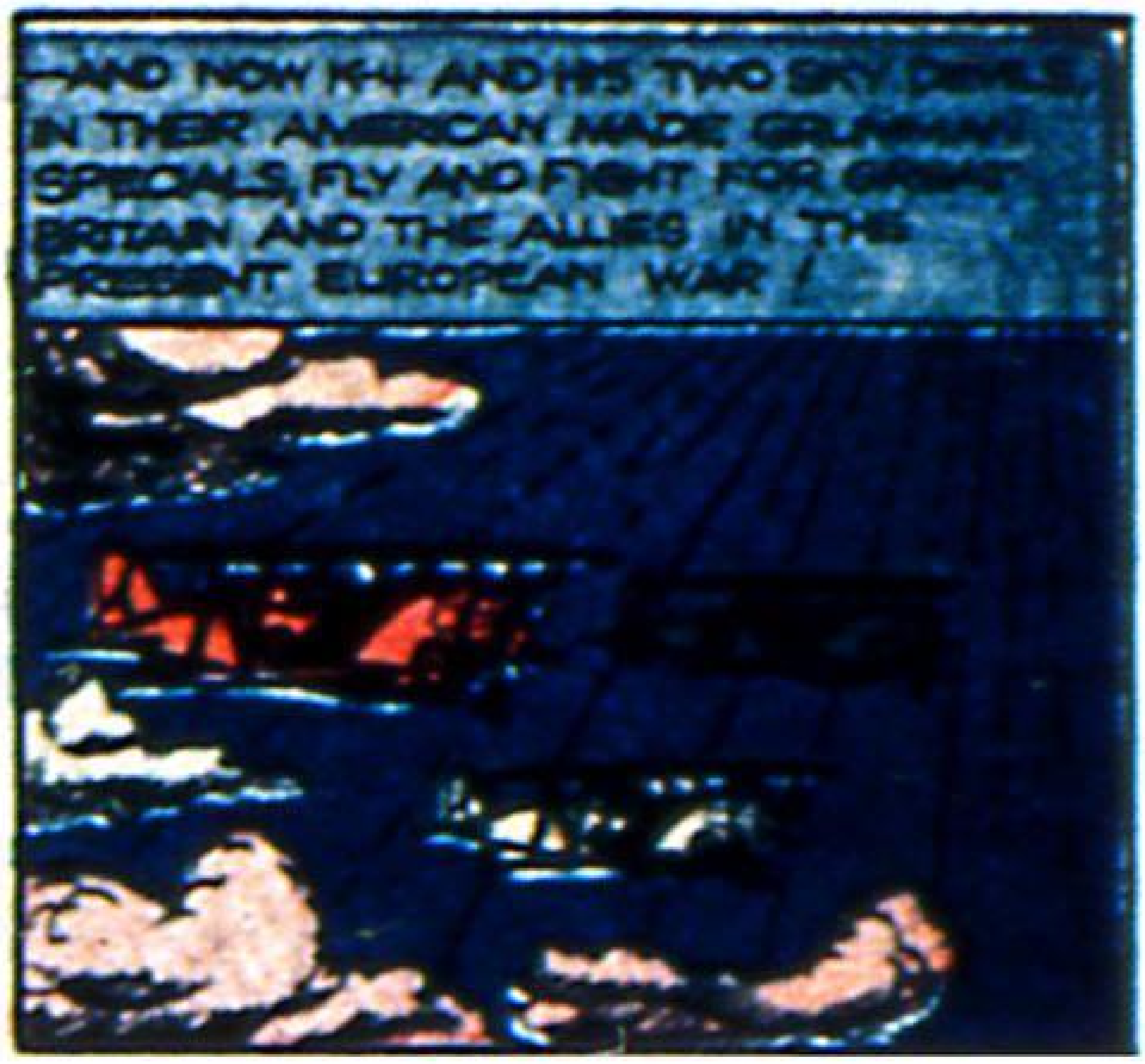

SUDDENLY, A BRITISH HAWKER BREAKS THRU THE ENEMY CONVOY—

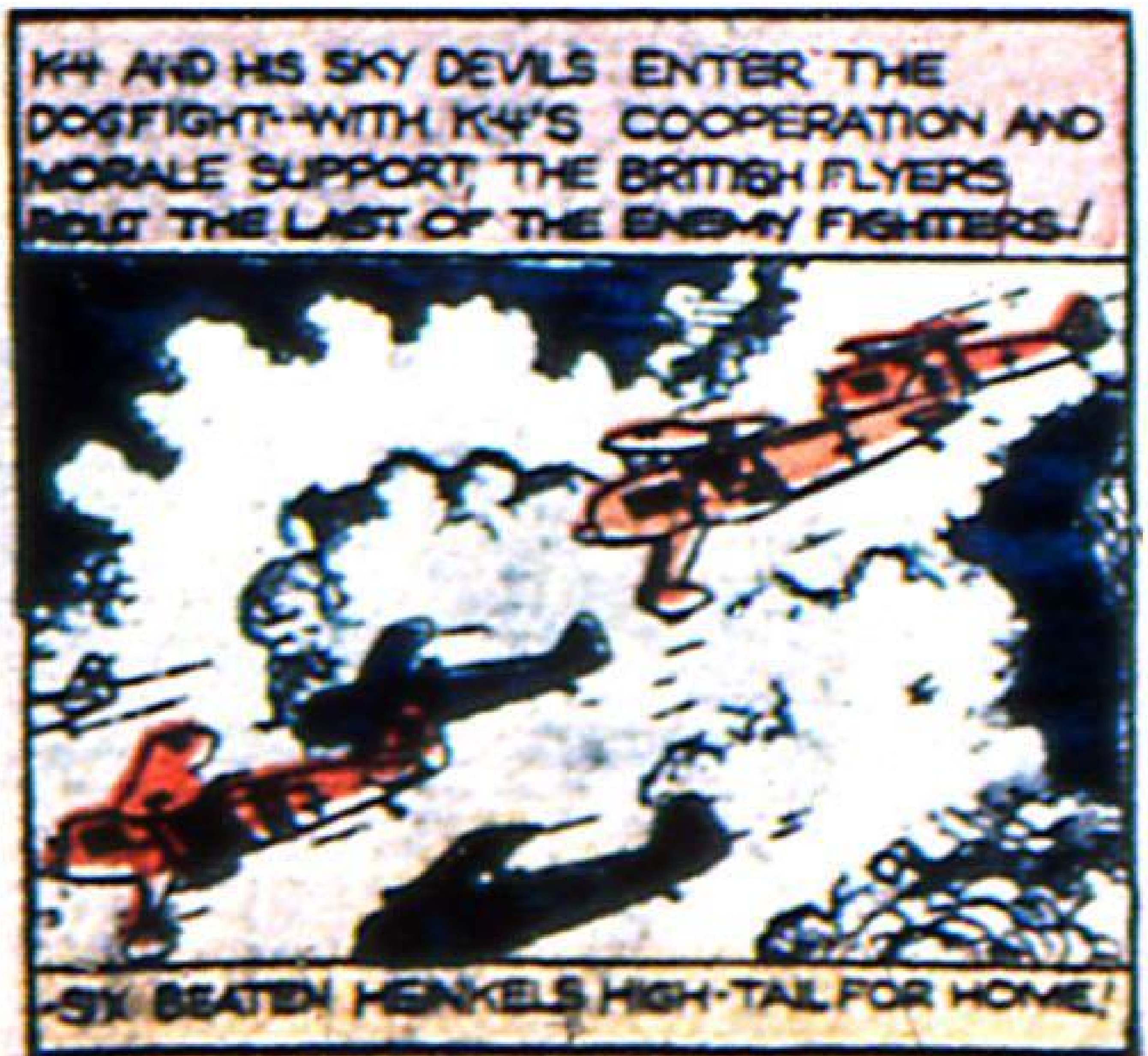

THE HAWKER PILOT SUDDENLY LEANS FORWARD IN THE COCKPIT—HE STARES AHEAD, AMAZED AT WHAT HE SEES!
THE PILOTS SLUMP OVER THE CONTROLS—
—THE TWIN MOTORS BURST INTO FLAME IGNITED BY SCORCHING TRACER
THE BIG BLACK-CROSSED BOMBER'S TAIL POINTS UP—IT FALLS, SPINNING EARTHWARD—
—LEAVING A TRAIL OF OILY, BLACK SMOKE.
LIKE A THUNDERBOLT, A TRIO OF SNUB-NOSED GRUMMANS FLASH DOWN IN A SCREAMING POWER-DIVE—THE DEADLY BLASTS OF THEIR LONG RANGE MACHINE GUNS HAD DEMOLISHED THE NAZI BOMBER!
SEEING THE BOMBER SHOT DOWN, THE BRITISH FLIER KICKS HIS HAWKER AROUND AND HEADS BACK TO THE RAGING DOGFIGHT
THAT'S ODD, THOSE THREE SHIPS SEEM TO BE AMERICAN MODELS, YET THEY CARRY ENGLISH INSIGNIA—I WONDER———
—THEN HE RECIEVES A CALL ON THE RADIO—
CHEER'O BRITISHER—K-4 SPEAKING—WE'LL TAG ALONG AND GIVE YOU BOYS A HAND IN BATTLING THAT SQUAD OF HEINKELS

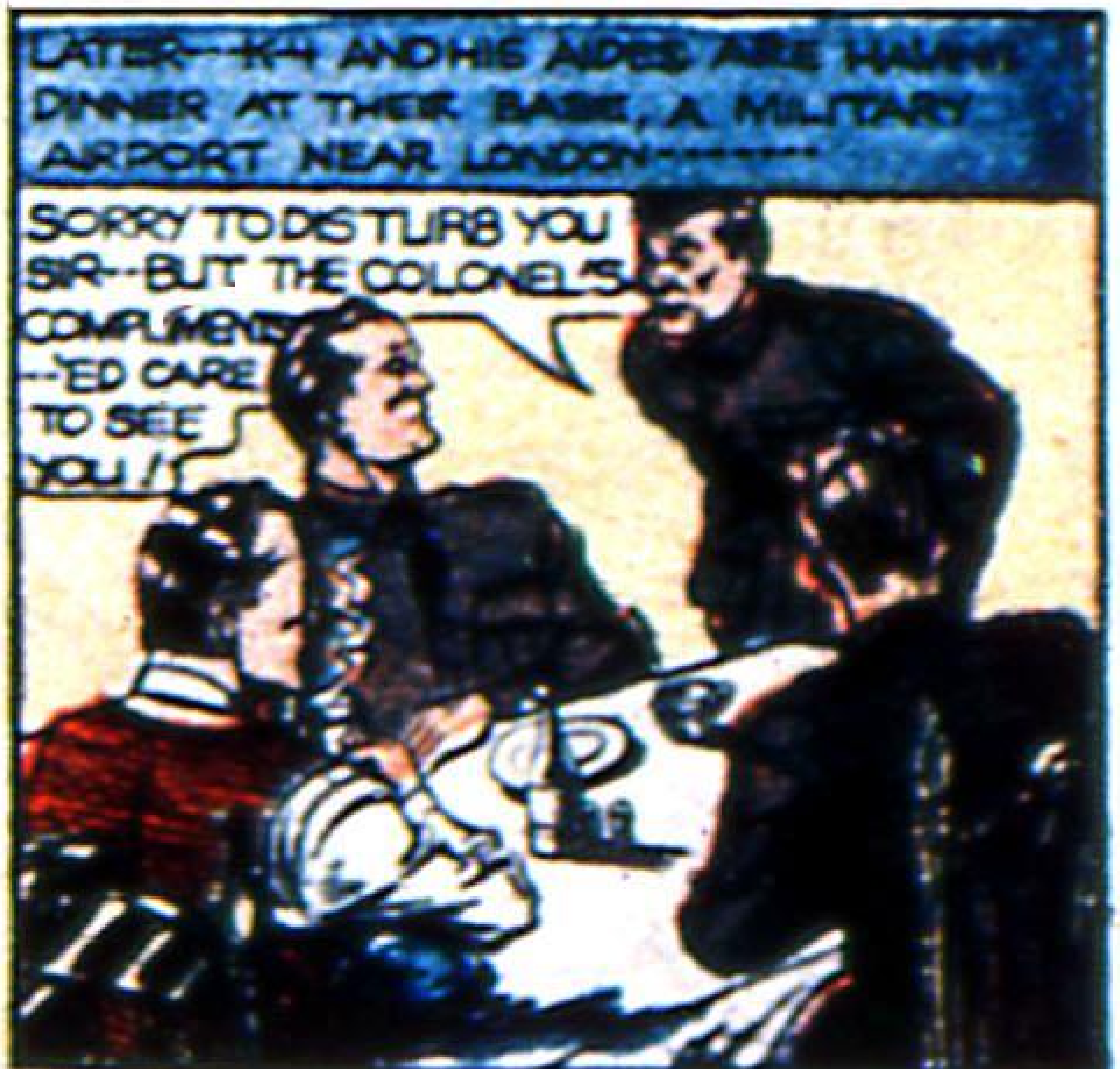

CAPT. K-4, FLYING SPY AND SOLDIER OF FORTUNE--THE YOUNGEST FLYING LIEUTENANT IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR WITH ELEVEN VICTORIES TO HIS CREDIT AT THE CLOSE--TRIPLE THAT WITH THE LOYALISTS IN THE SPANISH REBELLION, AND DOZENS MORE IN THE CHINA-JAPAN CONFLICT!

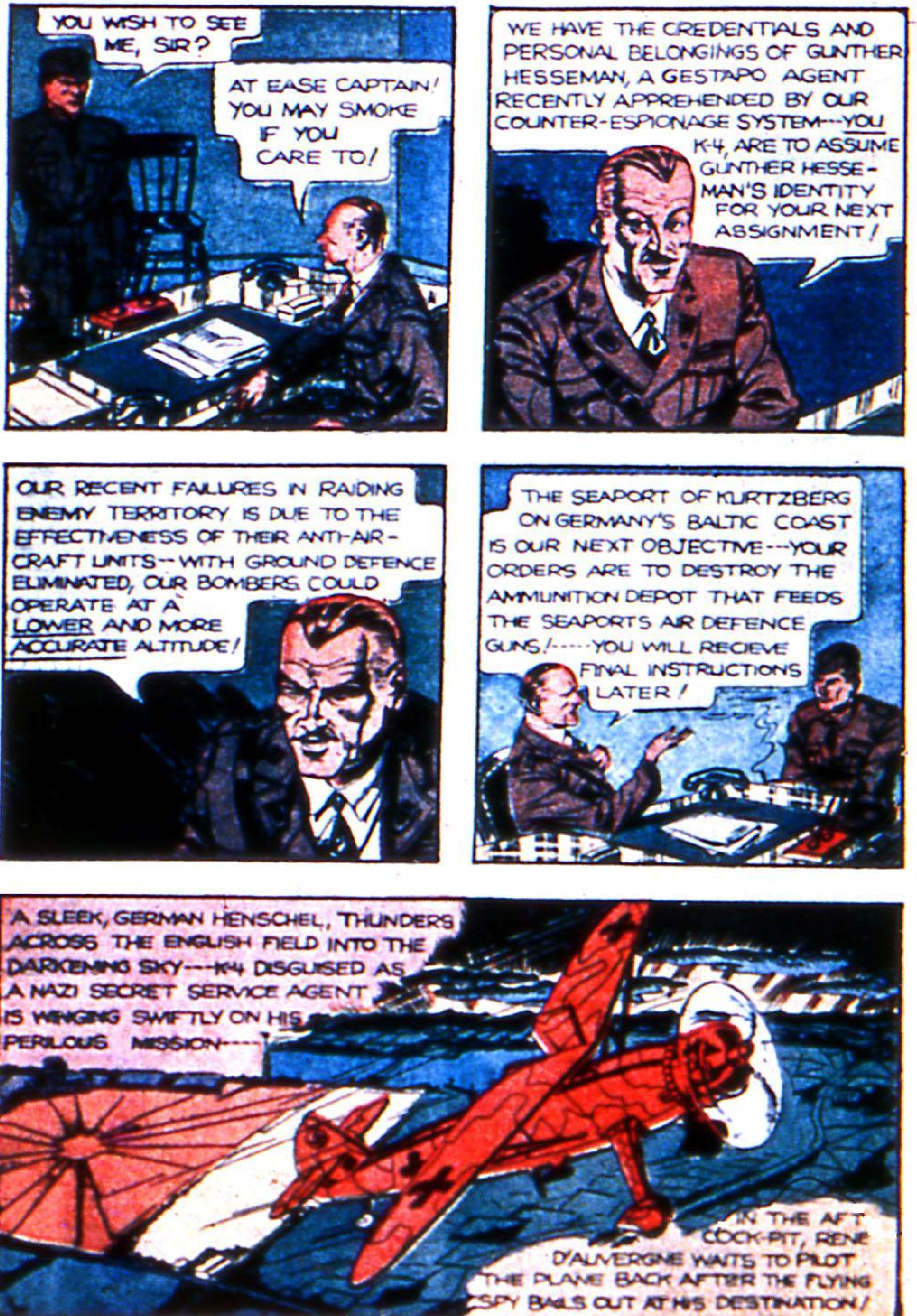

LIEUT. RENÉ D'AUVERGNE, FRENCH WORLD WAR ACE AND EXPERT SWORDSMAN, WHO NOW FLIES AS K-4'S DEVOTED ASSISTANT!

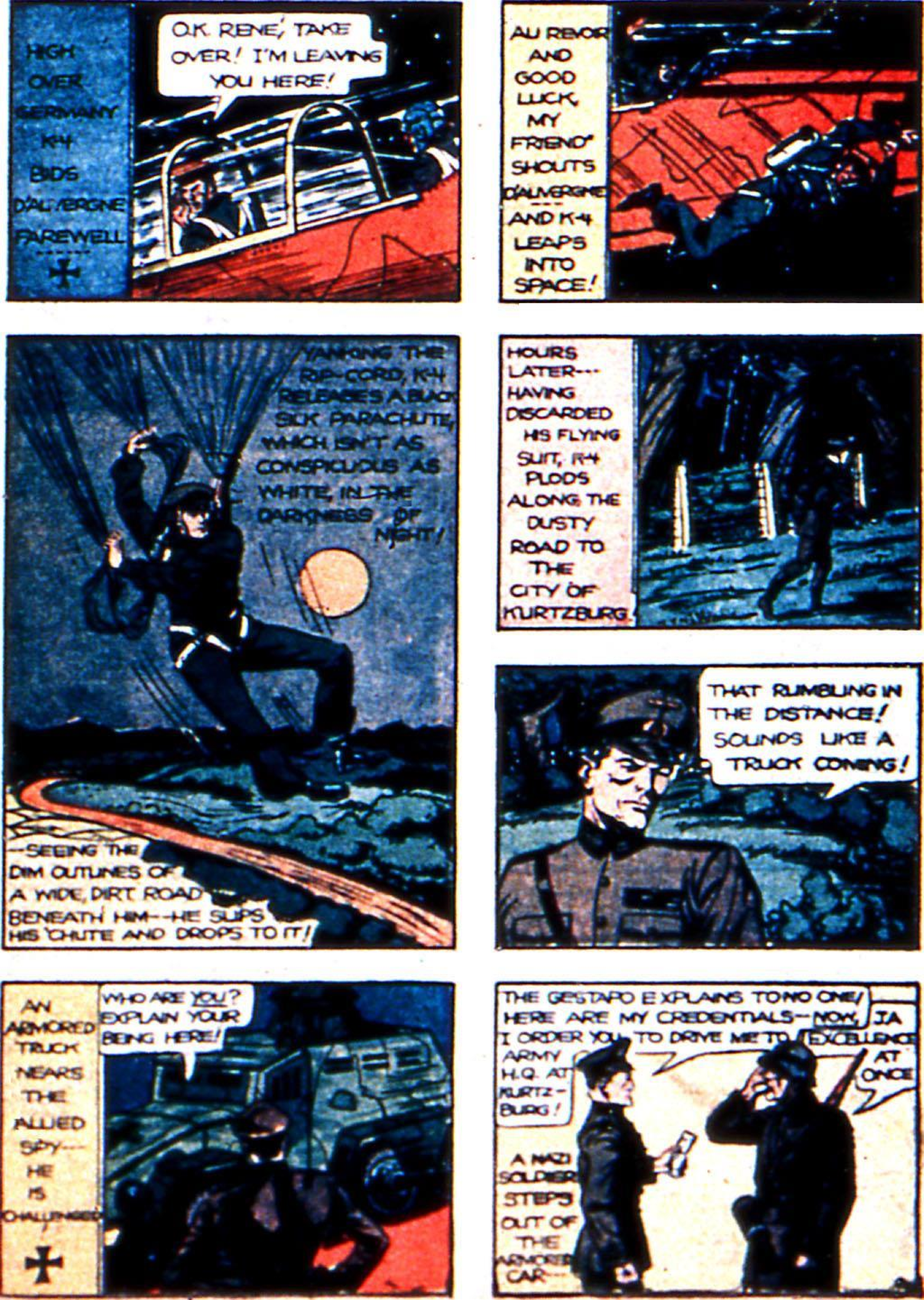

LIEUT. RONALD WOLVERSTONE-CLODD, SCION OF A WEALTHY ENGLISH FAMILY WHO GAVE UP WEALTH TO BECOME AN ACTOR--WITH A COMPLETE KNOWLEDGE OF MAKE-UP HE IS AN INVALUABLE AIDE TO K-4!

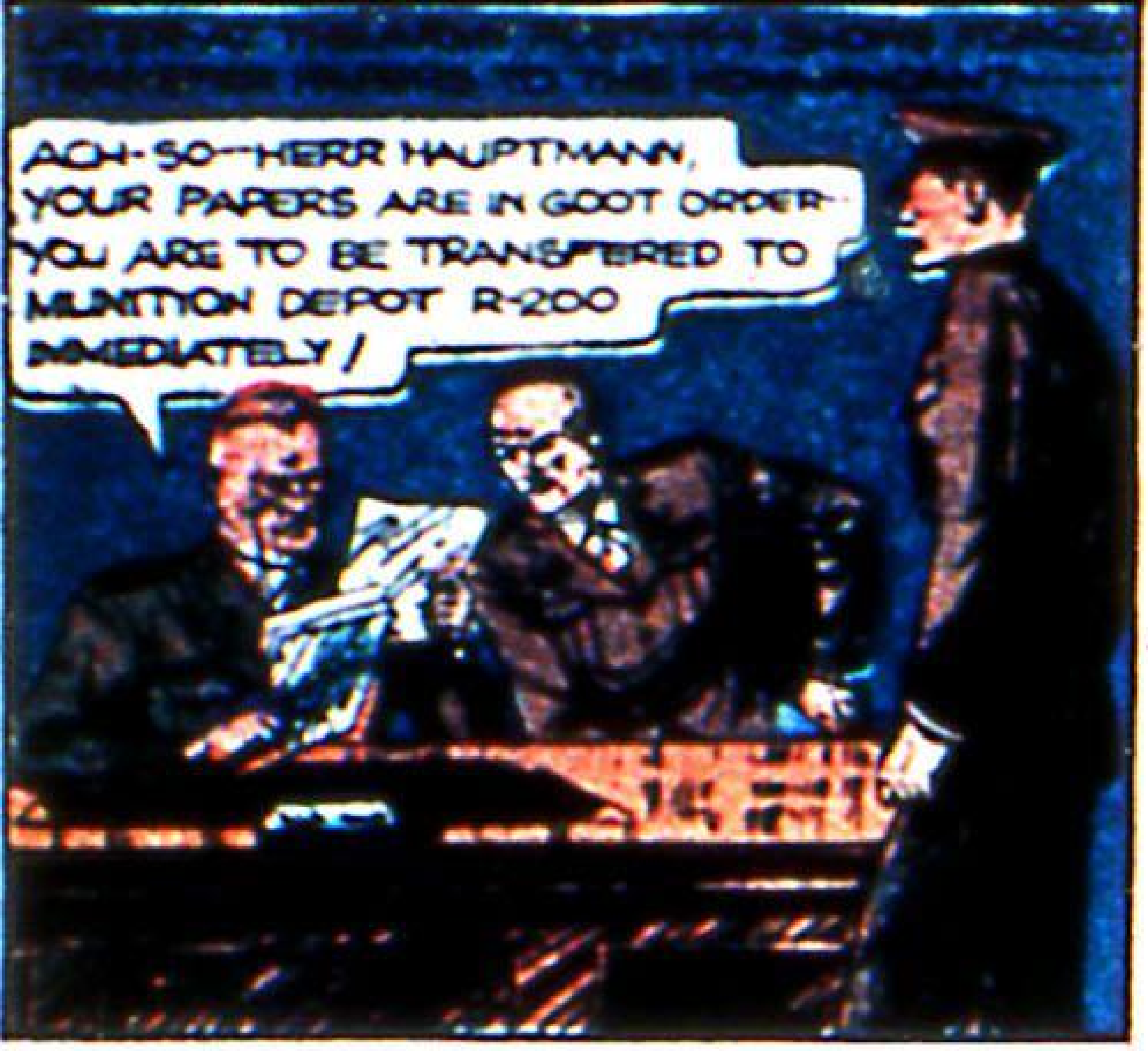

--AND NOW K-4 AND HIS TWO SKY DEVILS IN THEIR AMERICAN MADE GRUMMAN SPECIALS, FLY AND FIGHT FOR GREAT BRITAIN AND THE ALLIES IN THE PRESENT EUROPEAN WAR!

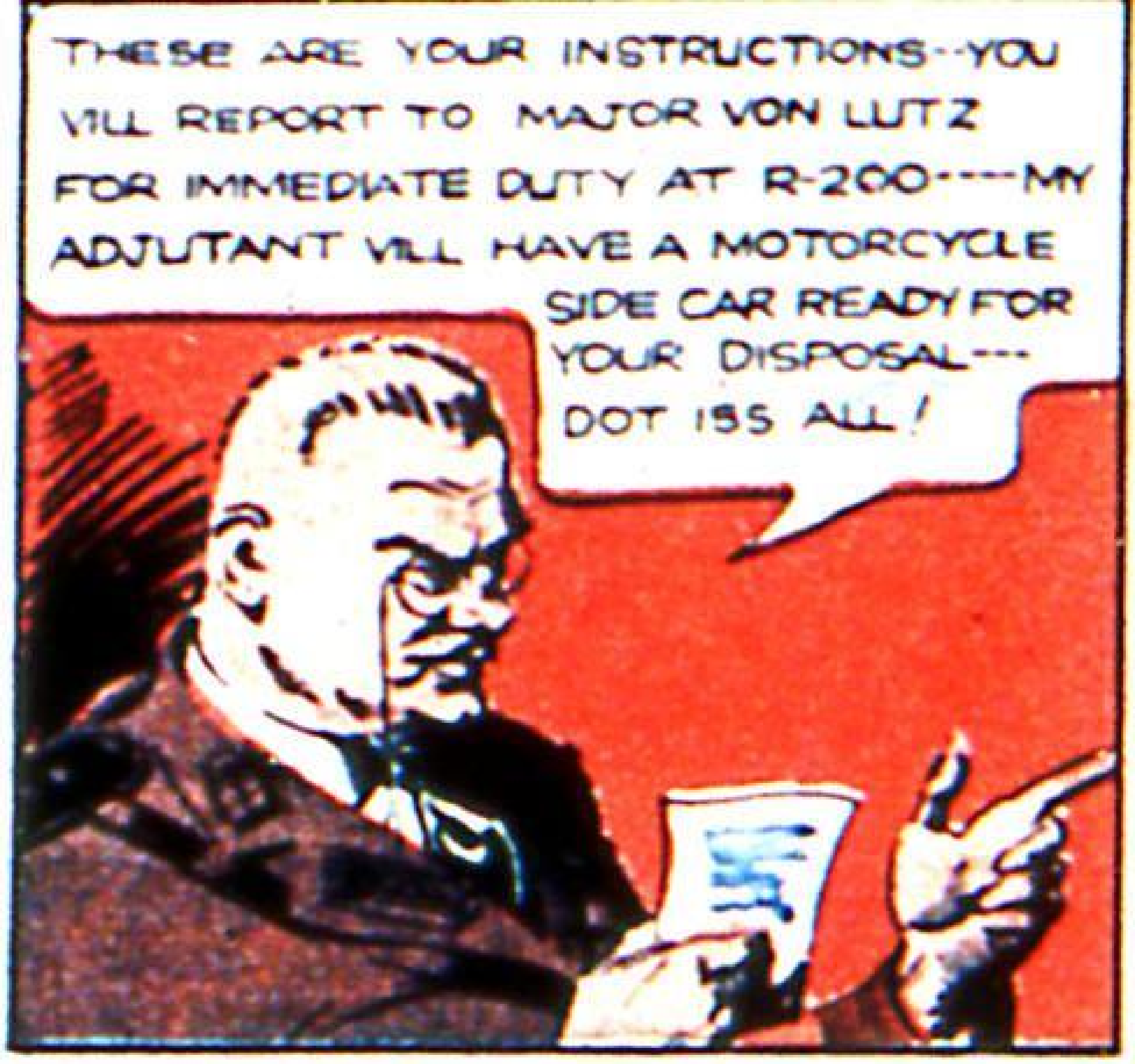

K-4 AND HIS SKY DEVILS ENTER THE DOGFIGHT--WITH K-4'S COOPERATION AND MORALE SUPPORT, THE BRITISH FLYERS ROUT THE LAST OF THE ENEMY FIGHTERS!
-SIX BEATEN HEINKELS HIGH-TAIL FOR HOME!

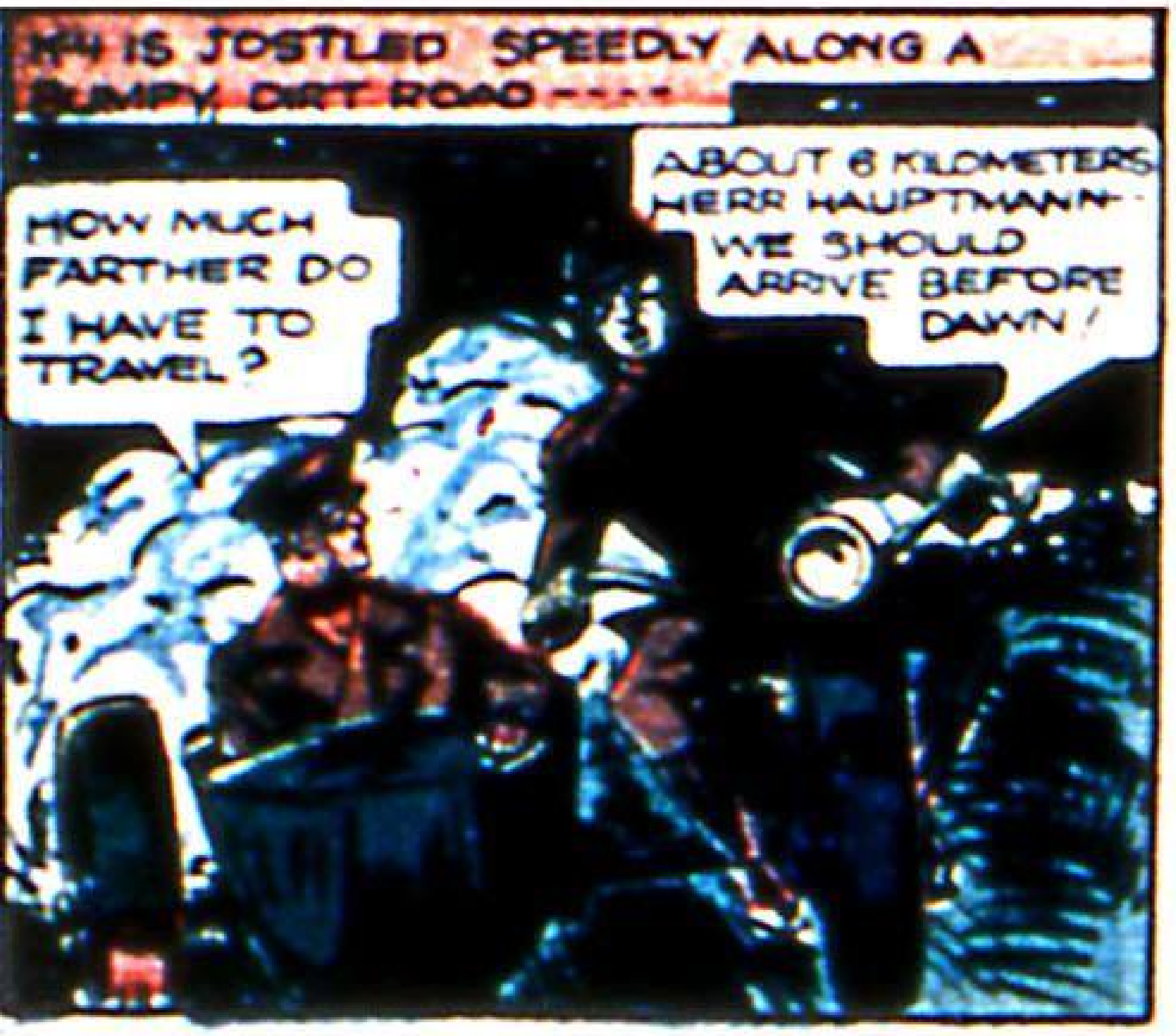

LATER--K-4 AND HIS AIDES ARE HAVING DINNER AT THEIR BASE, A MILITARY AIRPORT NEAR LONDON--------
SORRY TO DISTURB YOU SIR--BUT THE COLONEL'S COMPLIMENTS--'ED CARE TO SEE YOU!

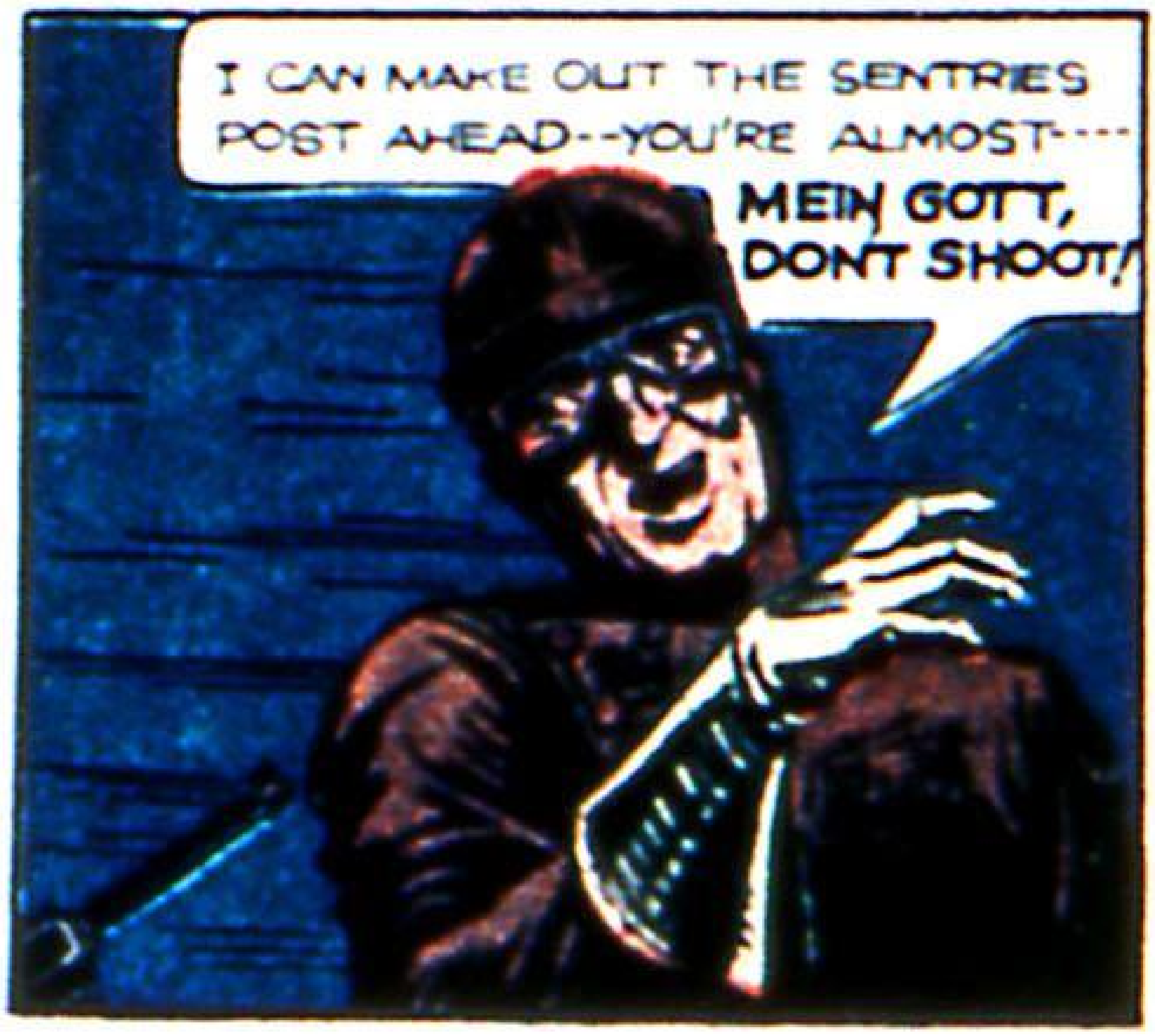

YOU WISH TO SEE ME, SIR?
AT EASE CAPTAIN! YOU MAY SMOKE IF YOU CARE TO!
WE HAVE THE CREDENTIALS AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS OF GUNTHER HESSEMAN, A GESTAPO AGENT RECENTLY APPREHENDED BY OUR COUNTER-ESPIONAGE SYSTEM---YOU K-4, ARE TO ASSUME GUNTHER HESSEMAN'S IDENTITY FOR YOUR NEXT ASSIGNMENT!
OUR RECENT FAILURES IN RAIDING ENEMY TERRITORY IS DUE TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR ANTI-AIRCRAFT UNITS--WITH GROUND DEFENCE ELIMINATED, OUR BOMBERS COULD OPERATE AT A LOWER AND MORE ACCURATE ALTITUDE!
THE SEAPORT OF KURTZBERG ON GERMANY'S BALTIC COAST IS OUR NEXT OBJECTIVE---YOUR ORDERS ARE TO DESTROY THE AMMUNITION DEPOT THAT FEEDS THE SEAPORTS AIR DEFENCE GUNS!-----YOU WILL RECIEVE FINAL INSTRUCTIONS LATER!
A SLEEK, GERMAN HENSCHEL, THUNDERS ACROSS THE ENGLISH FIELD INTO THE DARKENING SKY---K-4 DISGUISED AS A NAZI SECRET SERVICE AGENT IS WINGING SWIFTLY ON HIS PERILOUS MISSION---
IN THE AFT COCK-PIT, RENE D'ALVERGNE WAITS TO PILOT THE PLANE BACK AFTER THE FLYING SPY BAILS OUT AT HIS DESTINATION!

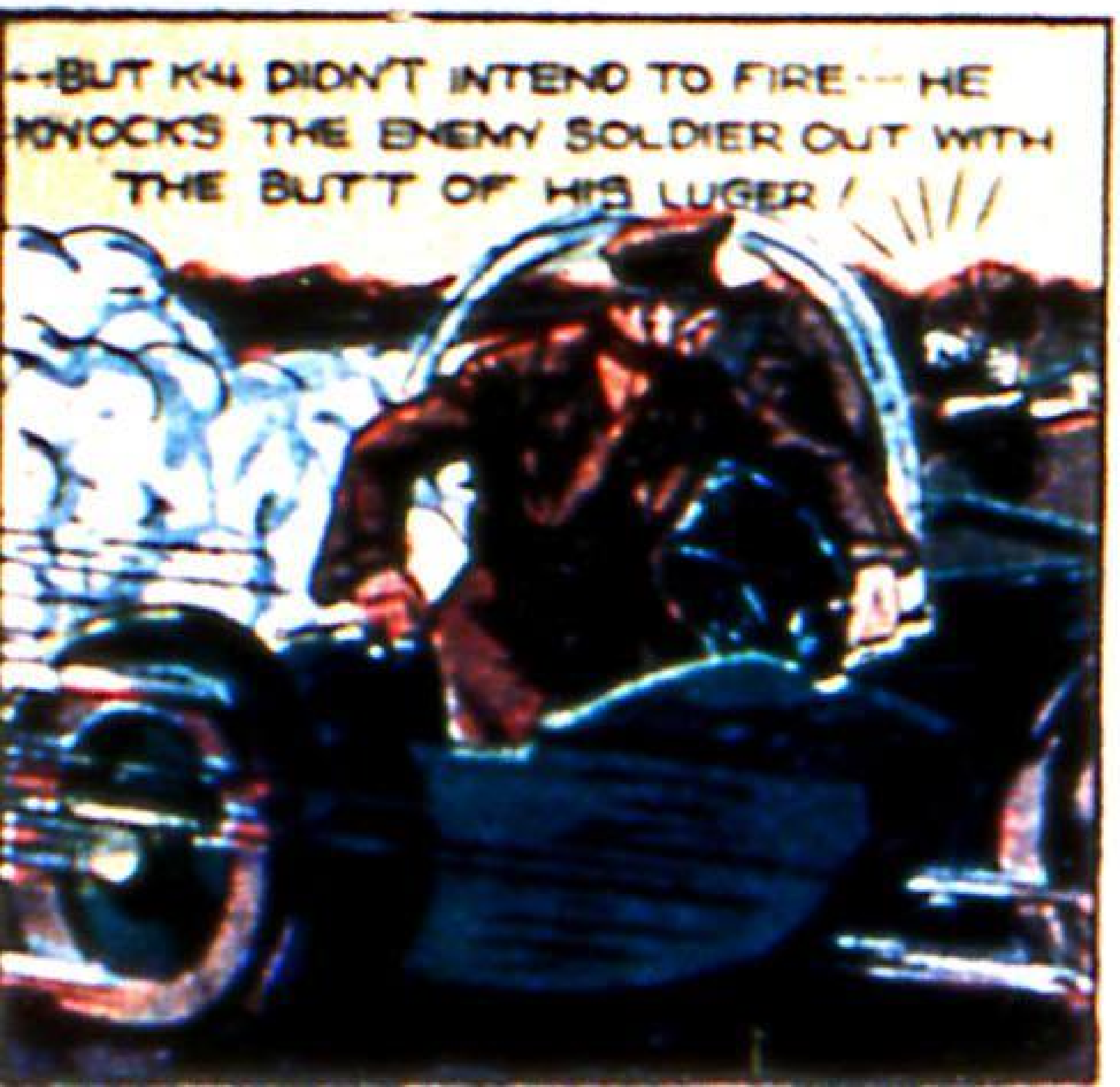

HIGH OVER GERMANY K-4 BIDS D'ALVERGNE FAREWELL ------
O.K. RENE, TAKE OVER! I'M LEAVING YOU HERE!
"AU REVOIR AND GOOD LUCK, MY FRIEND" SHOUTS D'ALVERGNE --- AND K-4 LEAPS INTO SPACE!
YANKING THE RIP-CORD, K-4 RELEASES A BLACK SILK PARACHUTE, WHICH ISN'T AS CONSPICUOUS AS WHITE, IN THE DARKNESS OF NIGHT!
--SEEING THE DIM OUTLINES OF A WIDE, DIRT ROAD BENEATH HIM--HE SLIPS HIS 'CHUTE AND DROPS TO IT!
HOURS LATER--- HAVING DISCARDED HIS FLYING SUIT, K-4 PLODS ALONG THE DUSTY ROAD TO THE CITY OF KURTZBURG.
THAT RUMBLING IN THE DISTANCE! SOUNDS LIKE A TRUCK COMING!
AN ARMORED TRUCK NEARS THE ALLIED SPY--- HE IS CHALLENGED!
WHO ARE YOU? EXPLAIN YOUR BEING HERE!
A NAZI SOLDIER STEPS OUT OF THE ARMORED CAR---
THE GESTAPO EXPLAINS TO NO ONE! HERE ARE MY CREDENTIALS--NOW, I ORDER YOU TO DRIVE ME TO ARMY H.Q. AT KURTZ-BURG!
JA EXCELLENCE AT ONCE

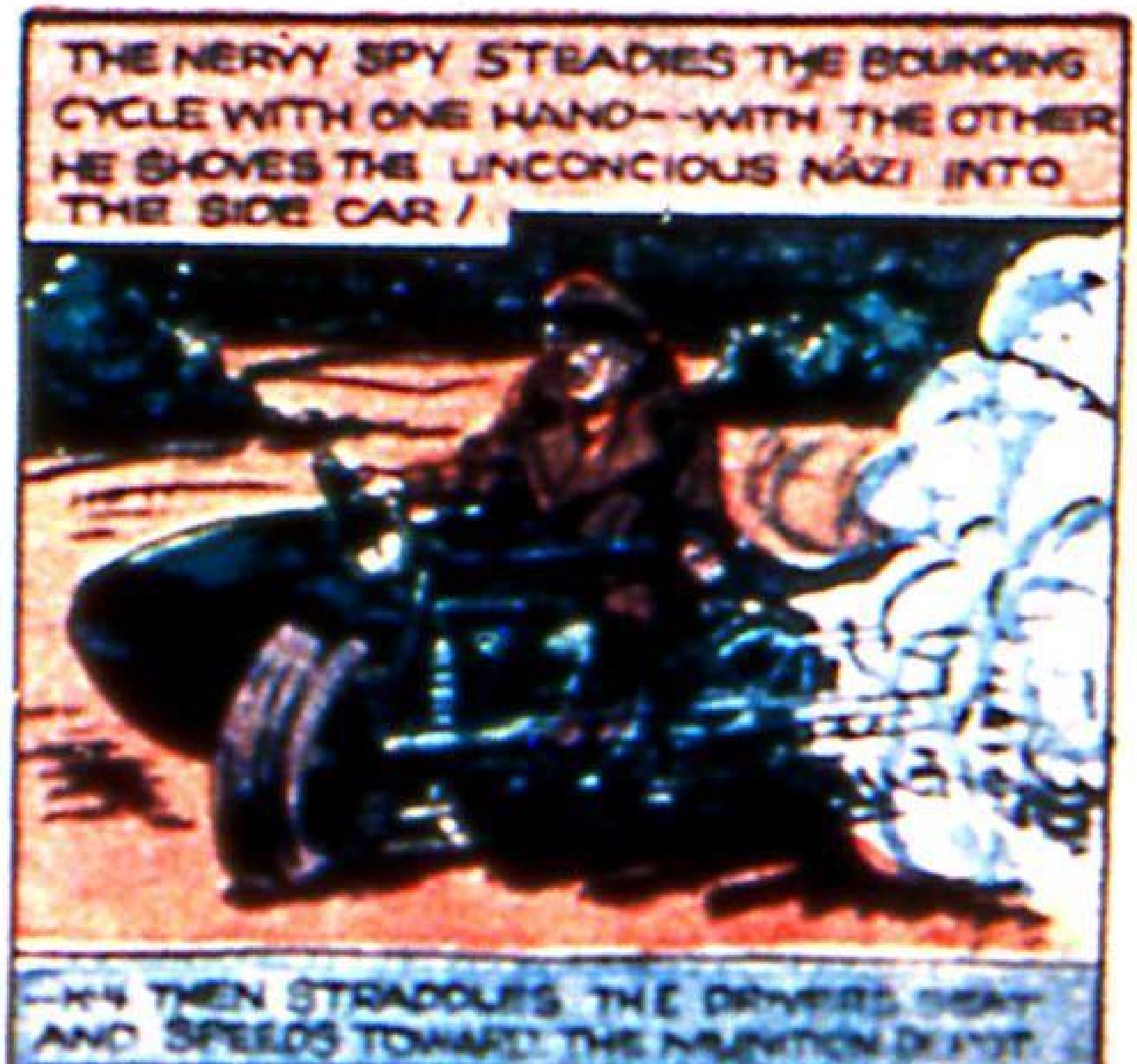

ACH-SO--HERR HAUPTMANN, YOUR PAPERS ARE IN GOOT ORDER-- YOU ARE TO BE TRANSFERED TO MUNITION DEPOT R-200 IMMEDIATELY!

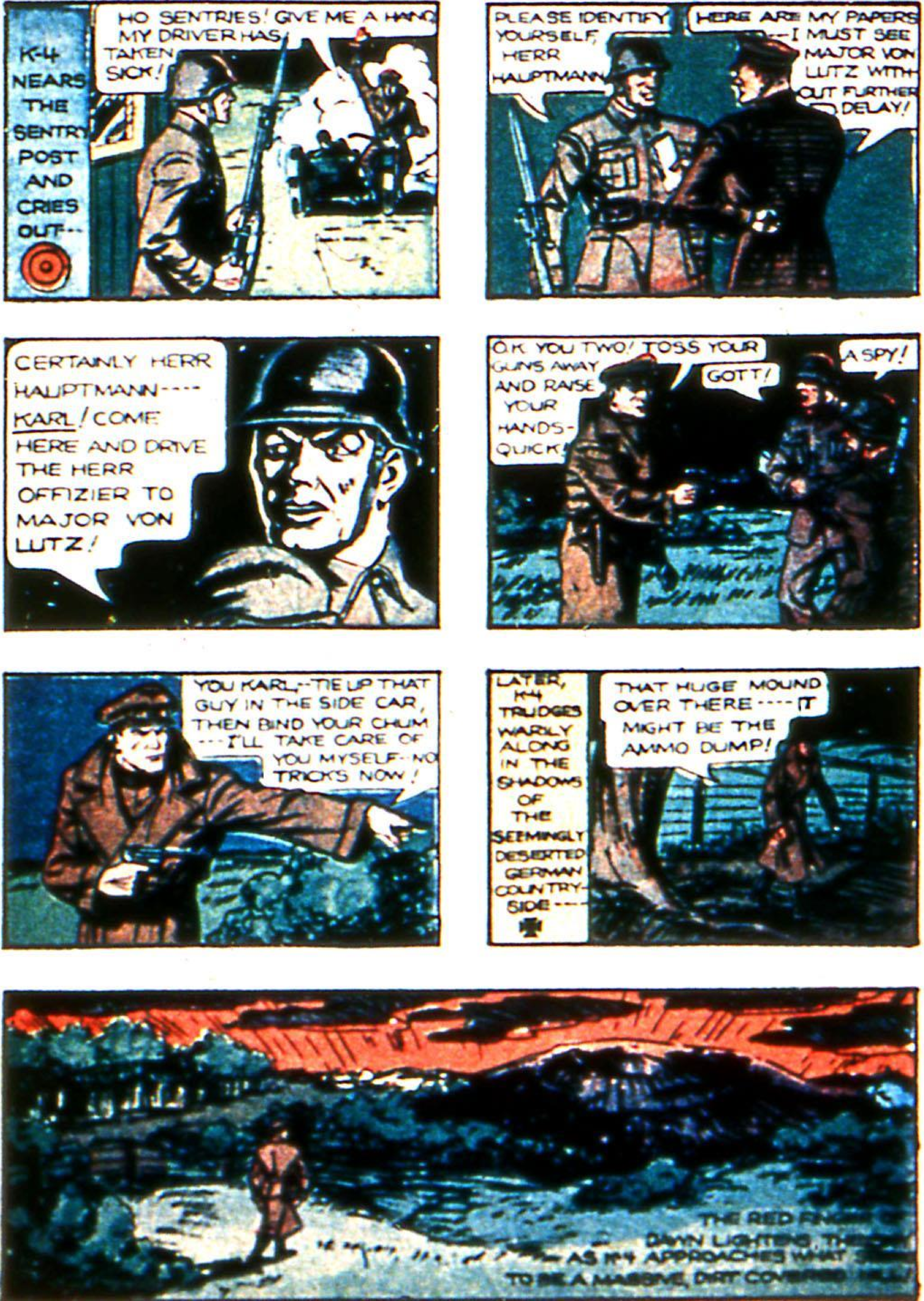

THESE ARE YOUR INSTRUCTIONS--YOU VILL REPORT TO MAJOR VON LUTZ FOR IMMEDIATE DUTY AT R-200----MY ADJUTANT VILL HAVE A MOTORCYCLE SIDE CAR READY FOR YOUR DISPOSAL--- DOT ISS ALL!

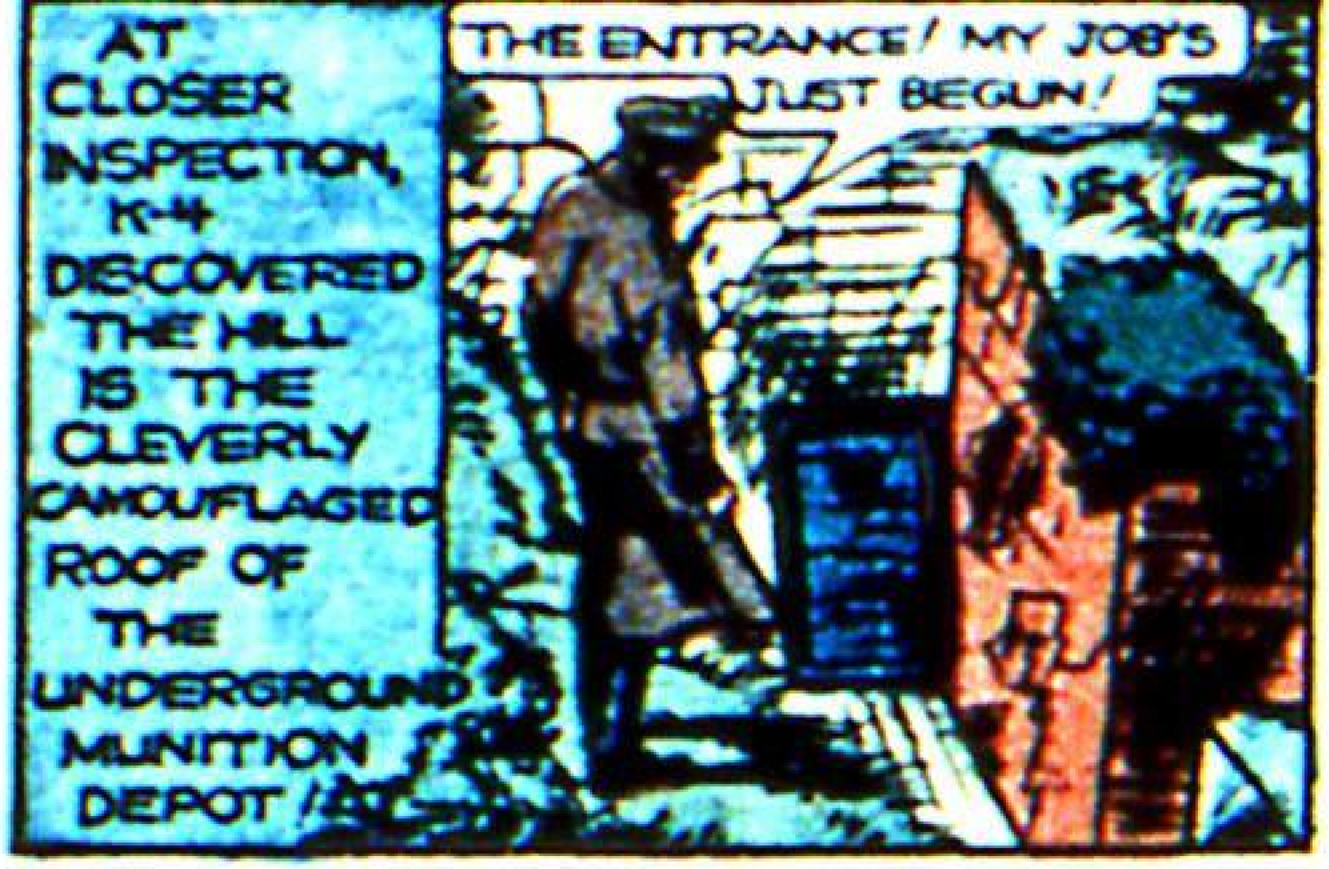

K4 IS JOSTLED SPEEDLY ALONG A BUMPY DIRT ROAD----
HOW MUCH FARTHER DO I HAVE TO TRAVEL?
ABOUT 6 KILOMETERS HERR HAUPTMANN-- WE SHOULD ARRIVE BEFORE DAWN!

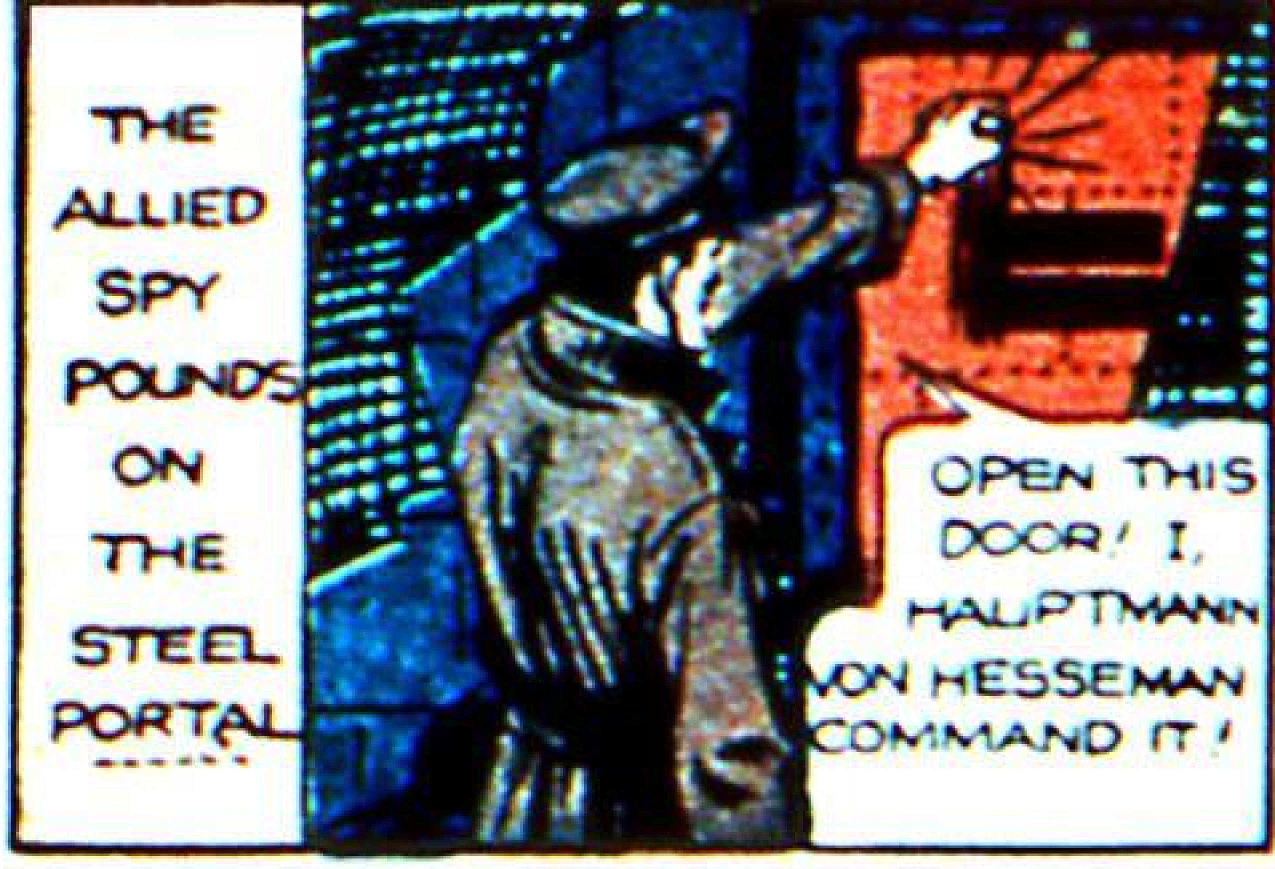

I CAN MAKE OUT THE SENTRIES POST AHEAD--YOU'RE ALMOST----
MEIN GOTT, DON'T SHOOT!

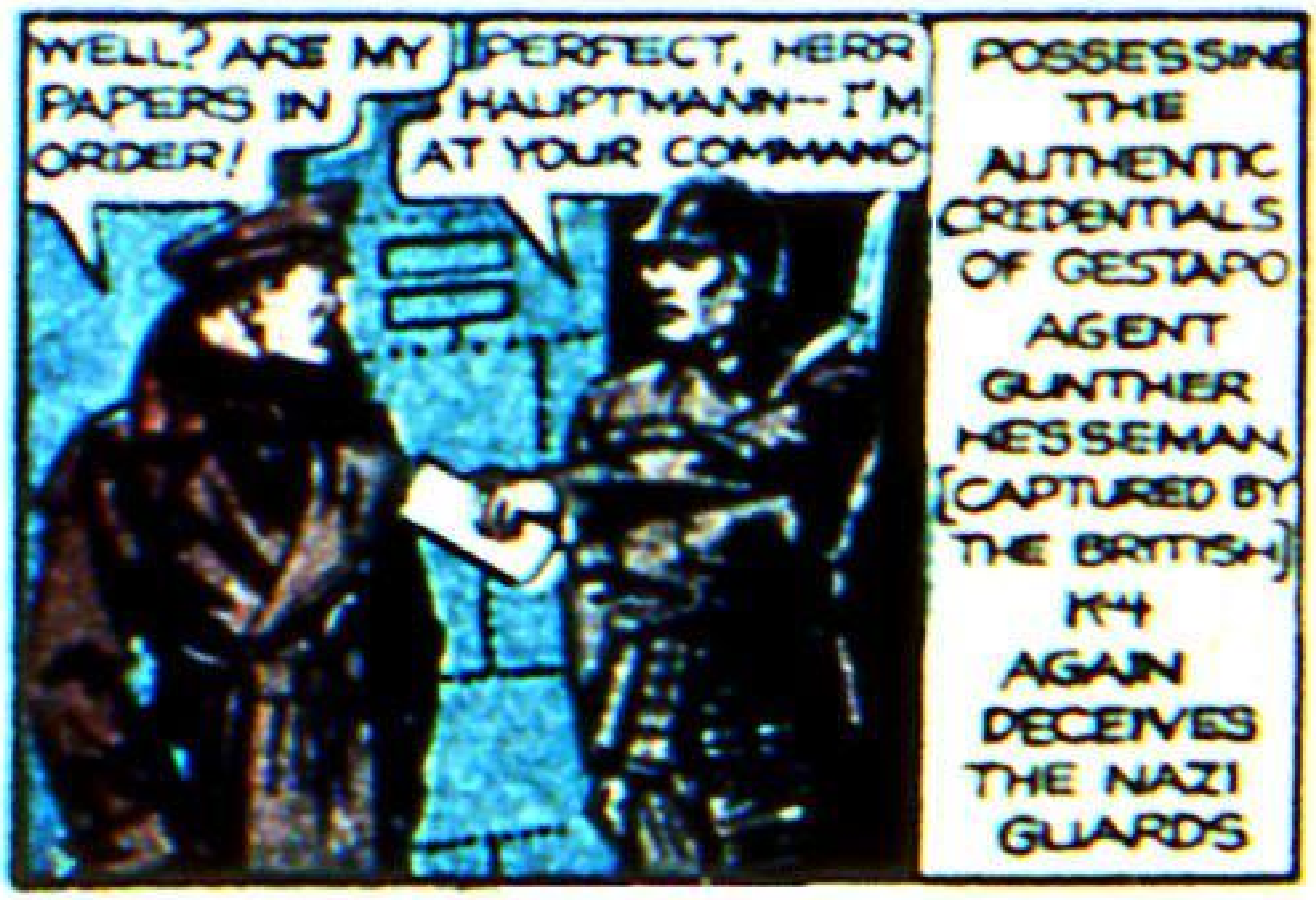

--BUT K4 DIDN'T INTEND TO FIRE---HE KNOCKS THE ENEMY SOLDIER OUT WITH THE BUTT OF HIS LUGER!

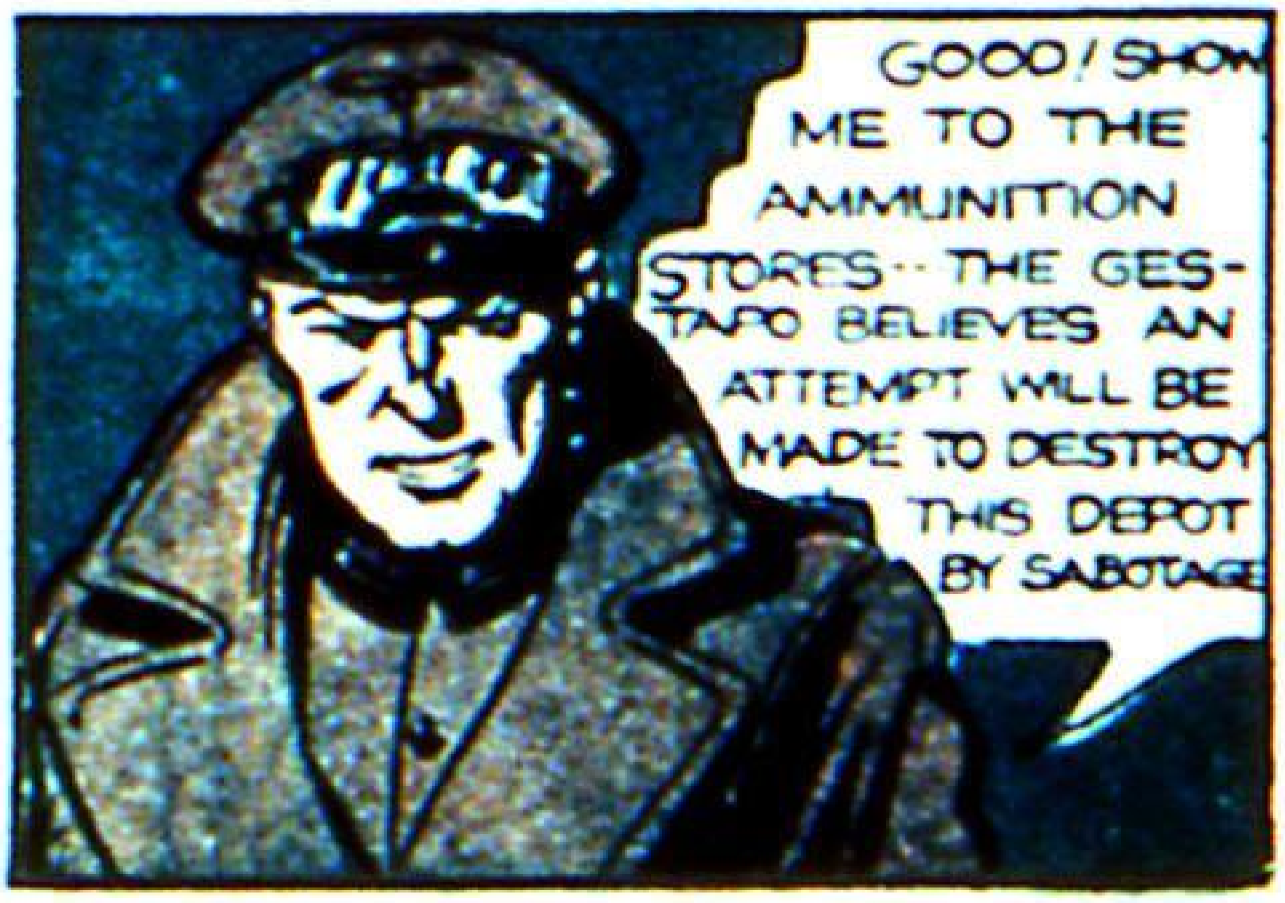

THE NERVY SPY STEADIES THE BOUNDING CYCLE WITH ONE HAND--WITH THE OTHER HE SHOVES THE UNCONCIOUS NAZI INTO THE SIDE CAR!
--K4 THEN STRADDLES THE DRIVER'S SEAT AND SPEEDS TOWARD THE MUNITION DEPOT.

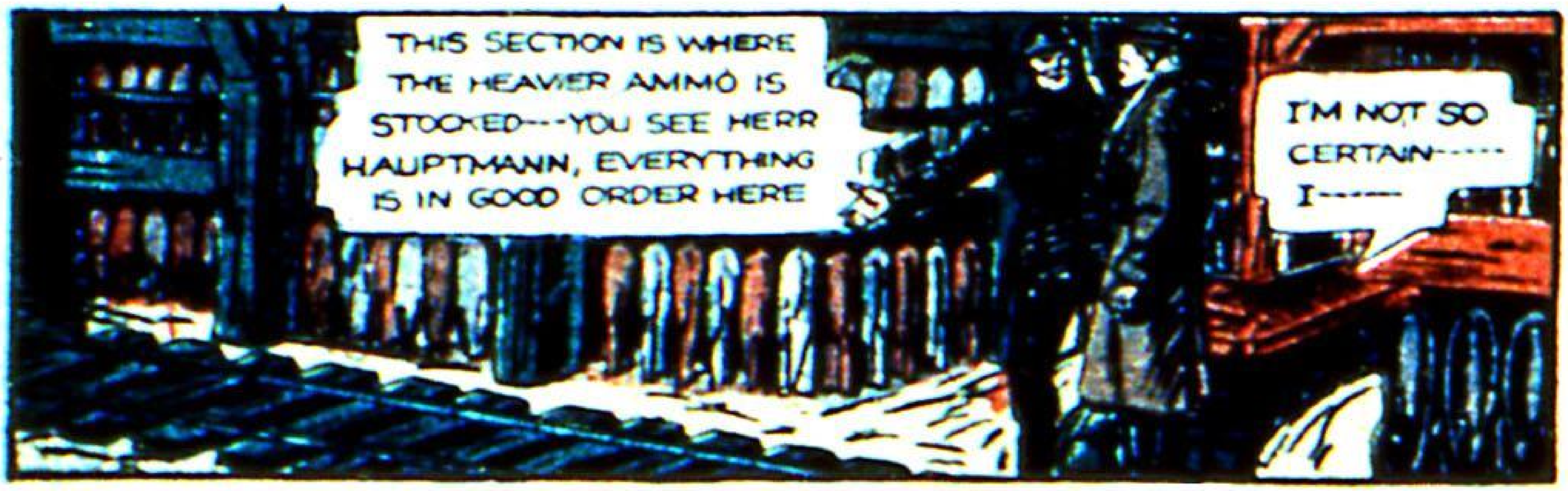

K-4 NEARS THE SENTRY POST AND CRIES OUT--
HO SENTRIES! GIVE ME A HAND MY DRIVER HAS TAKEN SICK!
PLEASE IDENTIFY YOURSELF, HERR HAUPTMANN
HERE ARE MY PAPERS --I MUST SEE MAJOR VON LUTZ WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY!
CERTAINLY HERR HAUPTMANN---- KARL! COME HERE AND DRIVE THE HERR OFFIZIER TO MAJOR VON LUTZ!
O.K. YOU TWO! TOSS YOUR GUNS AWAY AND RAISE YOUR HANDS- QUICK!
GOTT!
A SPY!
YOU KARL,--TIE UP THAT GUY IN THE SIDE CAR, THEN BIND YOUR CHUM ---I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU MYSELF--NO TRICKS NOW!
LATER, K-4 TRUDGES WARILY ALONG IN THE SHADOWS OF THE SEEMINGLY DESERTED GERMAN COUNTRYSIDE ----
THAT HUGE MOUND OVER THERE ---- IT MIGHT BE THE AMMO DUMP!
THE RED [illegible] DAWN LIGHTENS, TH[illegible] --AS K-4 APPROACHES WHAT [illegible] TO BE A MASSIVE, DIRT COV[illegible]

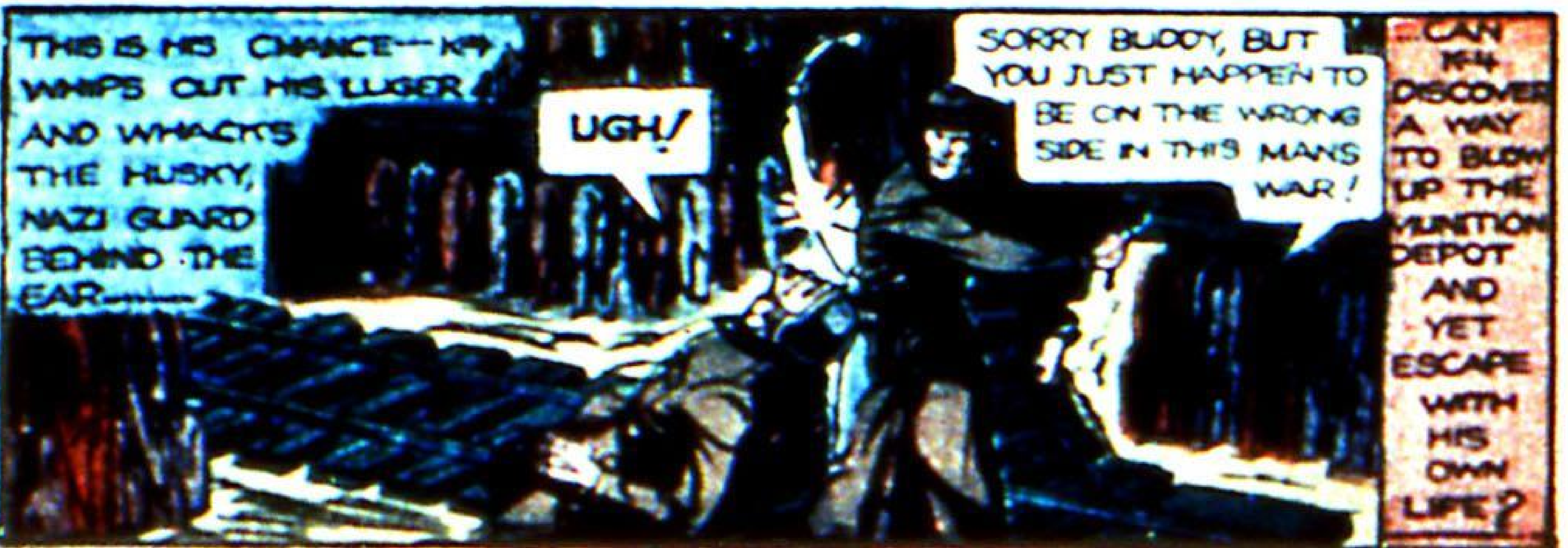

AT CLOSER INSPECTION, K-4 DISCOVERED THE HILL IS THE CLEVERLY CAMOUFLAGED ROOF OF THE UNDERGROUND MUNITION DEPOT!
THE ENTRANCE! MY JOB'S JUST BEGUN!

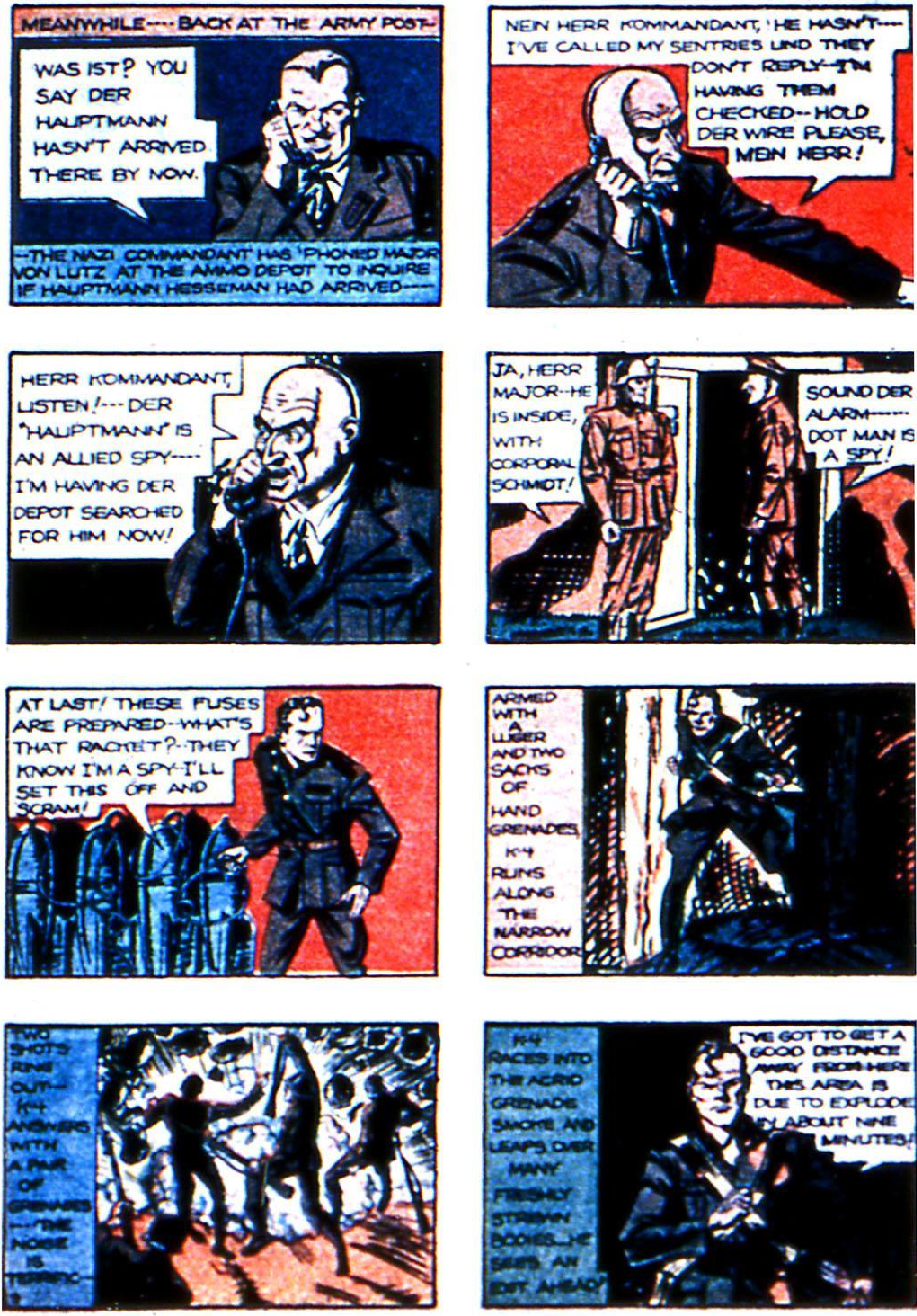

THE ALLIED SPY POUNDS ON THE STEEL PORTAL -----
OPEN THIS DOOR! I, HAUPTMANN VON HESSEMAN COMMAND IT!

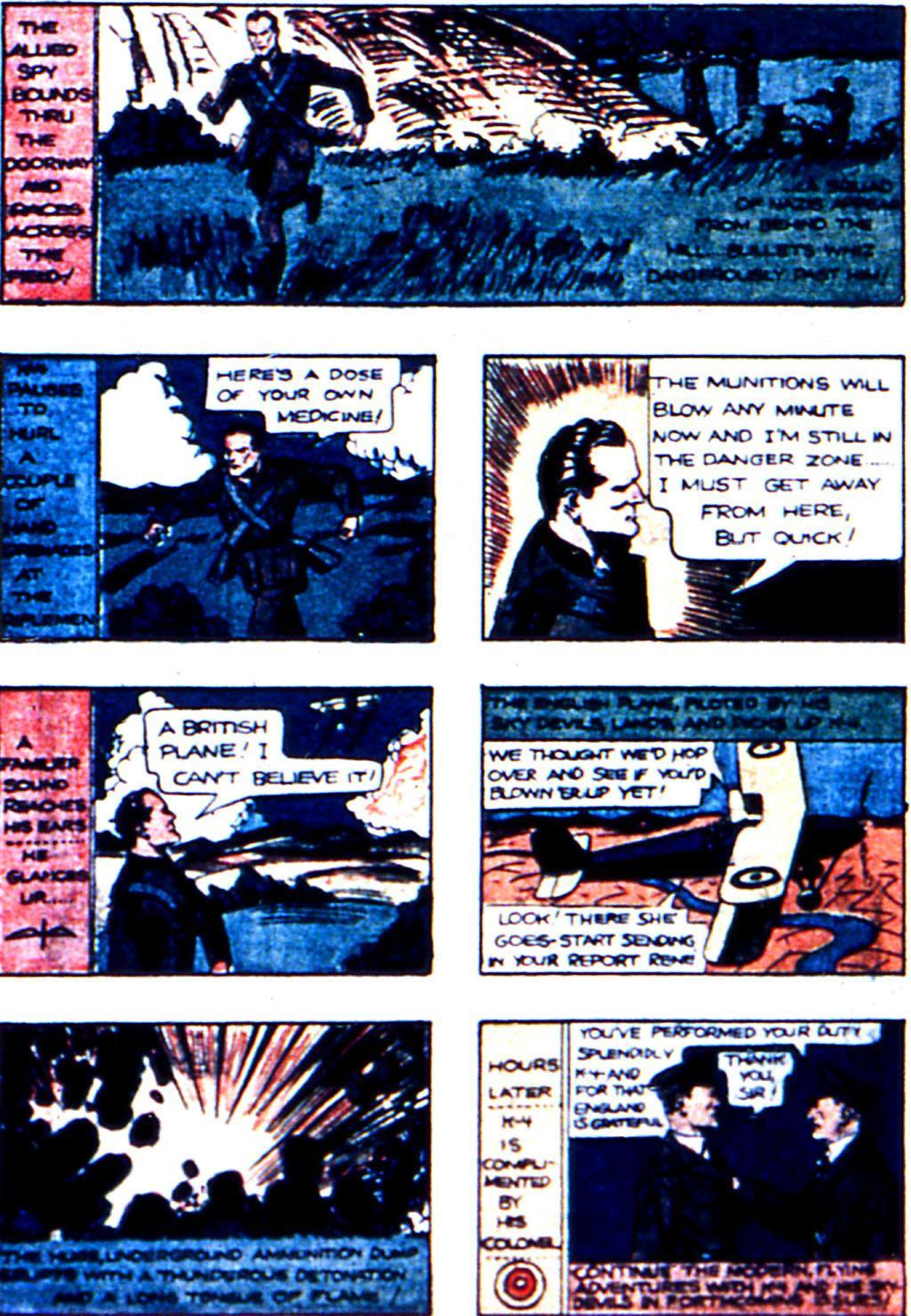

WELL? ARE MY PAPERS IN ORDER!
PERFECT, HERR HAUPTMANN--I'M AT YOUR COMMAND
POSSESSING THE AUTHENTIC CREDENTIALS OF GESTAPO AGENT GUNTHER HESSEMAN, [CAPTURED BY THE BRITISH] K-4 AGAIN DECEIVES THE NAZI GUARDS

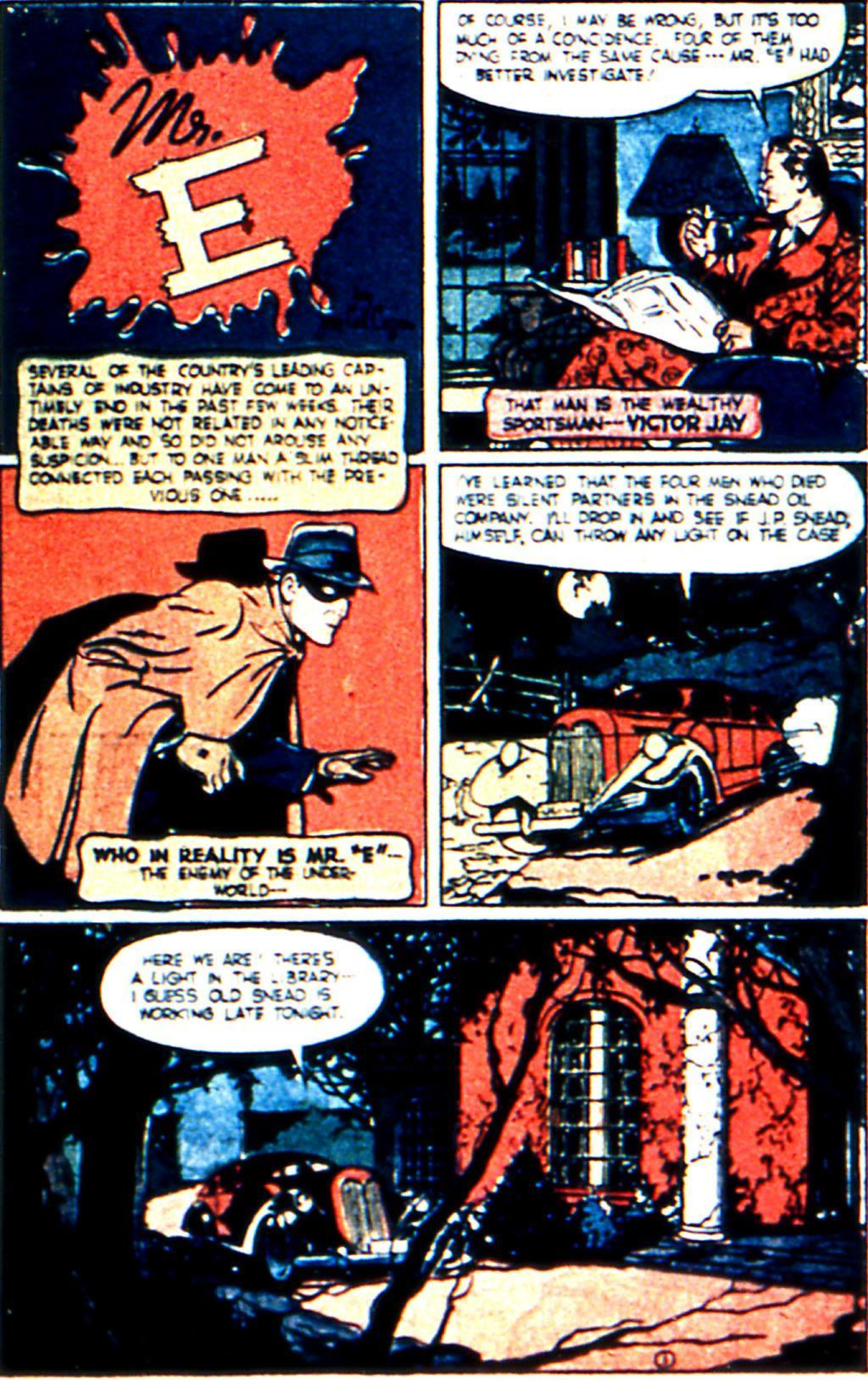

GOOD! SHOW ME TO THE AMMUNITION STORES--THE GESTAPO BELIEVES AN ATTEMPT WILL BE MADE TO DESTROY THIS DEPOT BY SABOTAGE

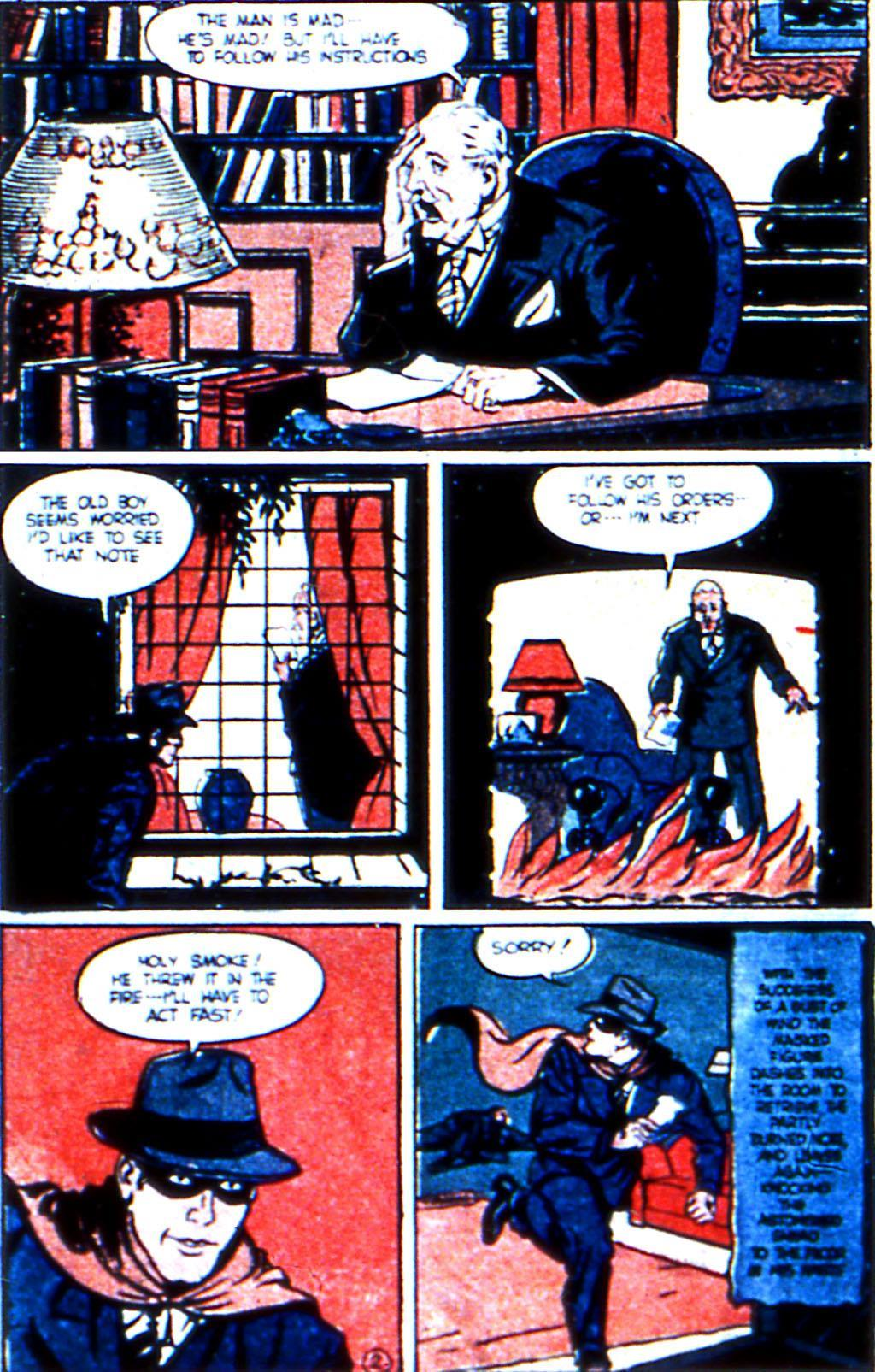

THIS SECTION IS WHERE THE HEAVIER AMMO IS STOCKED---YOU SEE HERR HAUPTMANN, EVERYTHING IS IN GOOD ORDER HERE
I'M NOT SO CERTAIN----- I------

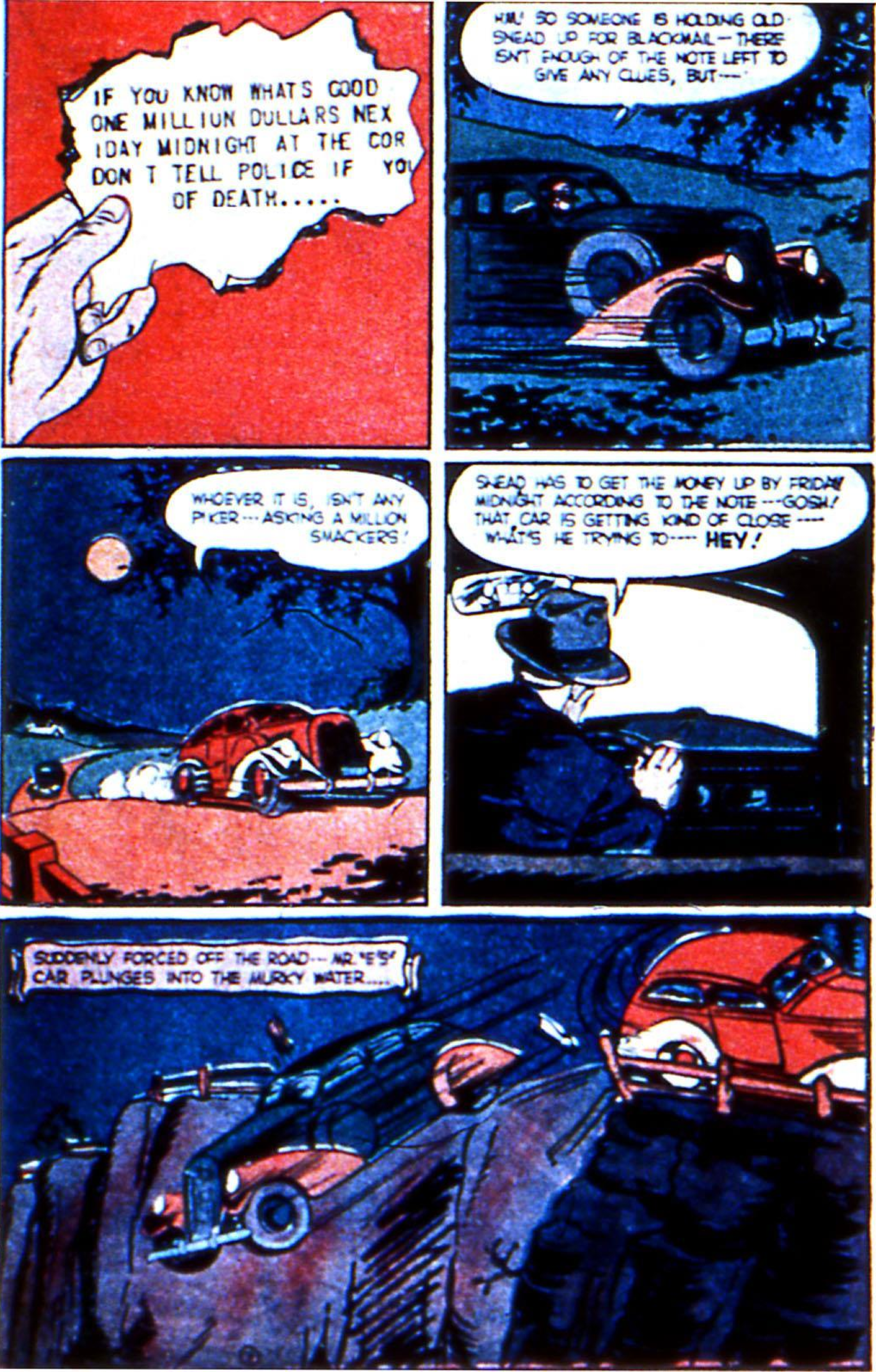

THIS IS HIS CHANCE---K-4 WHIPS OUT HIS LUGER AND WHACKS THE HUSKY, NAZI GUARD BEHIND THE EAR.......
UGH!
SORRY BUDDY, BUT YOU JUST HAPPEN TO BE ON THE WRONG SIDE IN THIS MANS WAR!
...CAN K-4 DISCOVER A WAY TO BLOW UP THE MUNITION DEPOT AND YET ESCAPE WITH HIS OWN LIFE?

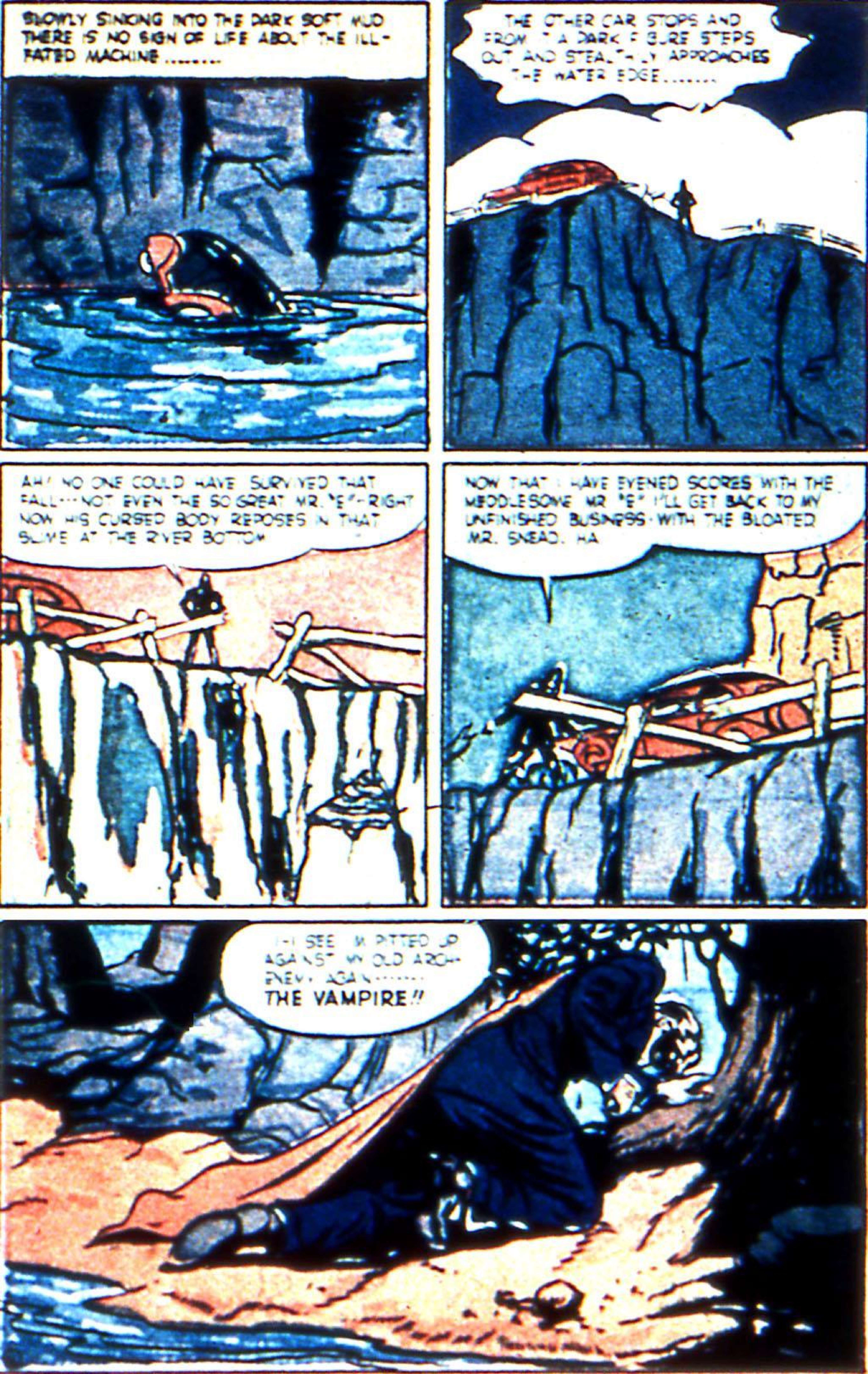

MEANWHILE---- BACK AT THE ARMY POST-
WAS IST? YOU SAY DER HAUPTMANN HASN'T ARRIVED THERE BY NOW.
--THE NAZI COMMANDANT HAS 'PHONED MAJOR VON LUTZ AT THE AMMO DEPOT TO INQUIRE IF HAUPTMANN HESSEMAN HAD ARRIVED----
NEIN HERR KOMMANDANT, 'HE HASN'T---- I'VE CALLED MY SENTRIES UND THEY DON'T REPLY--I'M HAVING THEM CHECKED--HOLD DER WIRE PLEASE, MEIN HERR!
HERR KOMMANDANT, LISTEN!---DER "HAUPTMANN" IS AN ALLIED SPY---- I'M HAVING DER DEPOT SEARCHED FOR HIM NOW!
JA, HERR MAJOR--HE IS INSIDE, WITH CORPORAL SCHMIDT!
SOUND DER ALARM------ DOT MAN IS A SPY!
AT LAST! THESE FUSES ARE PREPARED--WHAT'S THAT RACKET?--THEY KNOW I'M A SPY--I'LL SET THIS OFF AND SCRAM!
ARMED WITH A LUGER AND TWO SACKS OF HAND GRENADES, K-4 RUNS ALONG THE NARROW CORRIDOR
TWO SHOTS RING OUT-- K-4 ANSWERS WITH A PAIR OF GRENADES ---THE NOISE IS TERRIFIC--
K-4 RACES INTO THE ACRID GRENADE SMOKE AND LEAPS OVER MANY FRIENDLY STRICKEN BODIES--HE SEES AN EXIT AHEAD!
I'VE GOT TO GET A GOOD DISTANCE AWAY FROM HERE THIS AREA IS DUE TO EXPLODE IN ABOUT NINE MINUTES!

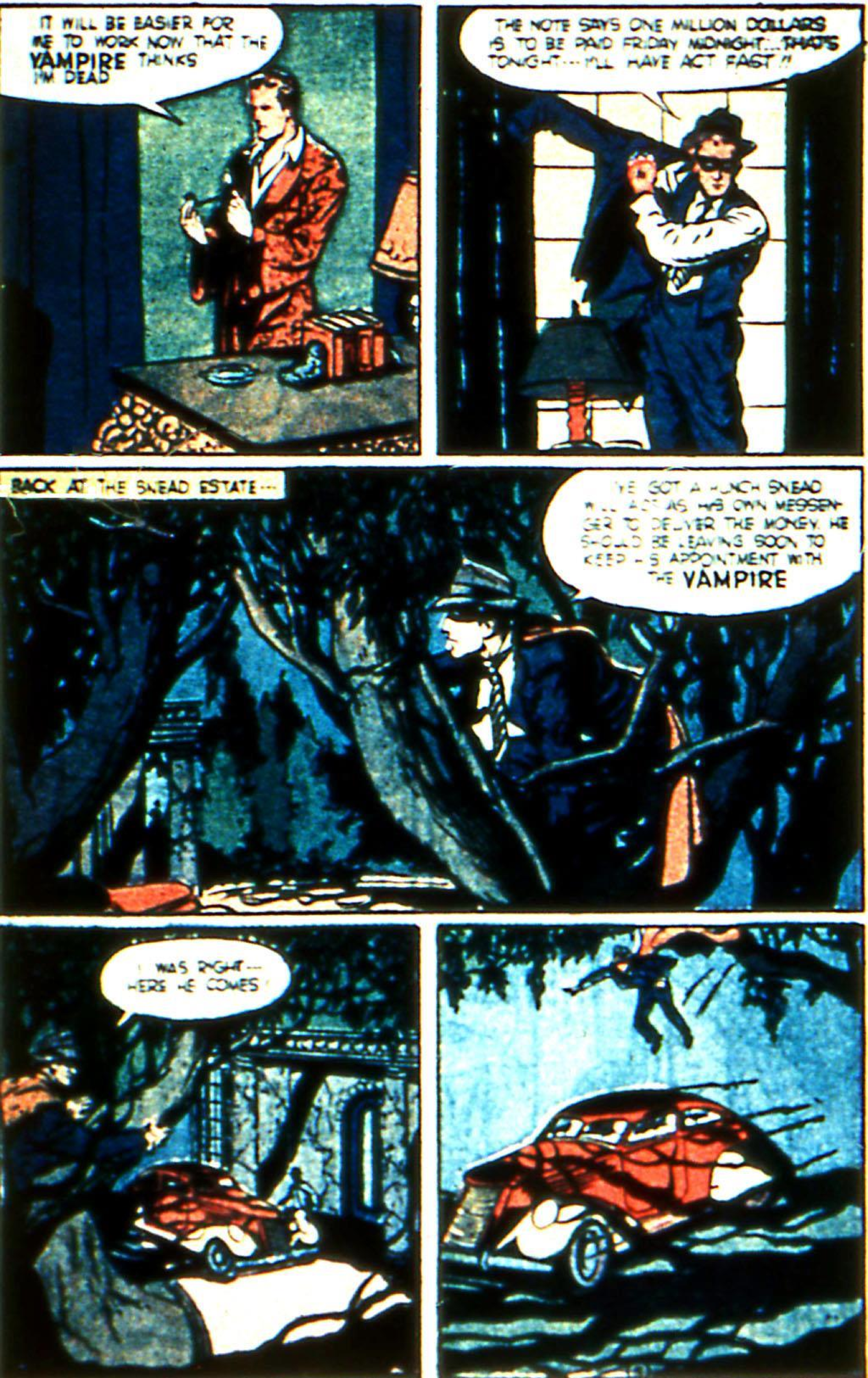

THE ALLIED SPY BOUNDS THRU THE DOORWAY AND RACES ACROSS THE FIELD!
...A SQUAD OF NAZIS APPEAR FROM BEHIND THE HILL... BULLETS WHIZ DANGEROUSLY PAST HIM!
HE PAUSES TO HURL A COUPLE OF HAND GRENADES AT THE RIFLEMEN
HERE'S A DOSE OF YOUR OWN MEDICINE!
THE MUNITIONS WILL BLOW ANY MINUTE NOW AND I'M STILL IN THE DANGER ZONE..... I MUST GET AWAY FROM HERE, BUT QUICK!
A FAMILIAR SOUND REACHES HIS EARS .... HE GLANCES UP....
A BRITISH PLANE! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
THE ENGLISH PLANE, PILOTED BY HIS SKY DEVILS, LANDS AND PICKS UP K-4
WE THOUGHT WE'D HOP OVER AND SEE IF YOU'D BLOWN 'ER UP YET!
LOOK! THERE SHE GOES-START SENDING IN YOUR REPORT RENE
THE HUGE UNDERGROUND AMMUNITION DUMP ERUPTS WITH A THUNDEROUS DETONATION AND A LONG TONGUE OF FLAME!
HOURS LATER .... K-4 IS COMPLI-MENTED BY HIS COLONEL
YOU'VE PERFORMED YOUR DUTY SPLENDIDLY K-4 AND FOR THAT ENGLAND IS GRATEFUL
THANK YOU, SIR!
CONTINUE THE MODERN, FLYING ADVENTURES WITH K-4 AND HIS SKY DEVILS IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES!

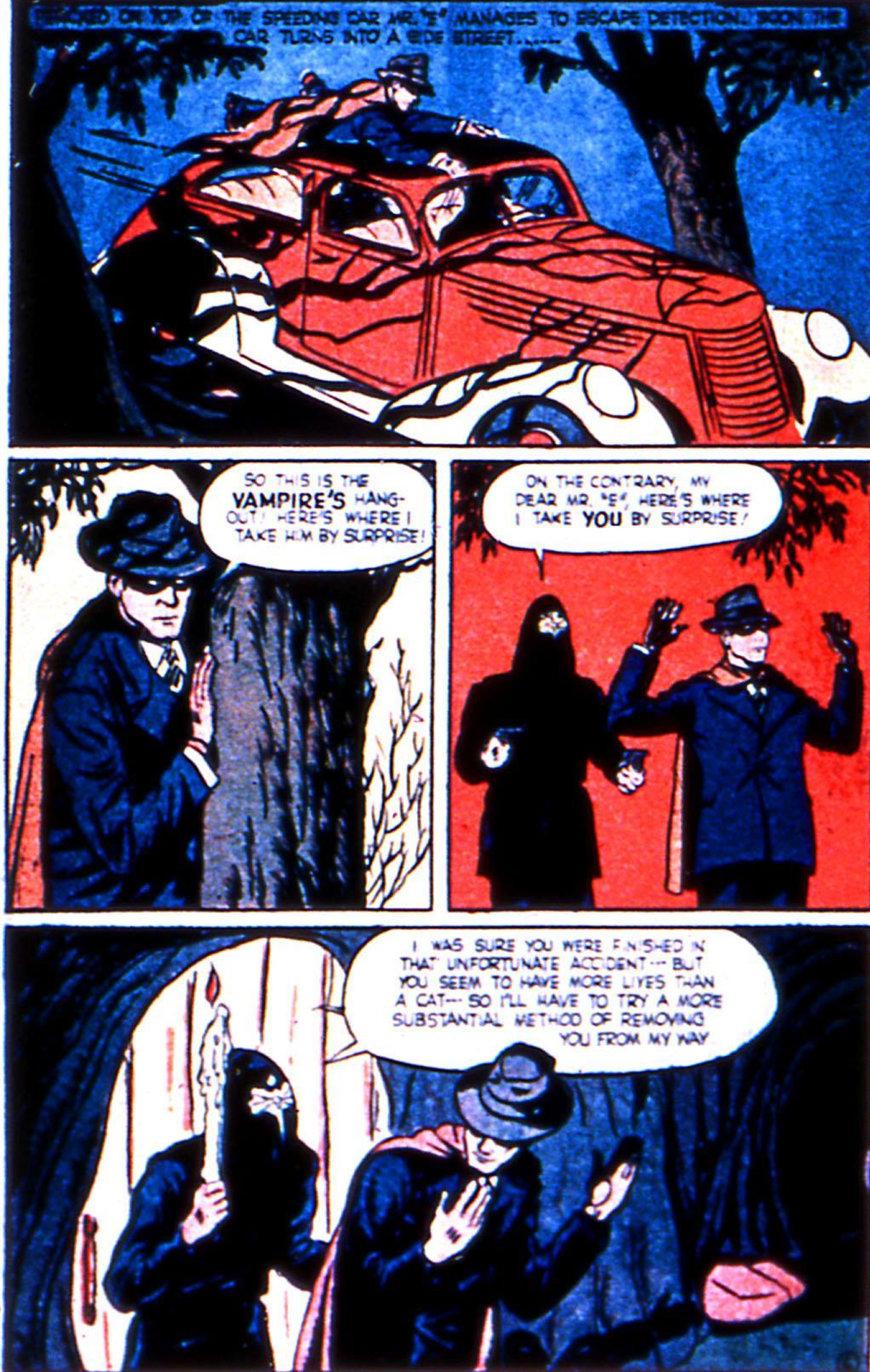

Mr. E
SEVERAL OF THE COUNTRY'S LEADING CAPTAINS OF INDUSTRY HAVE COME TO AN UNTIMELY END IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS. THEIR DEATHS WERE NOT RELATED IN ANY NOTICEABLE WAY AND SO DID NOT AROUSE ANY SUSPICION... BUT TO ONE MAN A SLIM THREAD CONNECTED EACH PASSING WITH THE PREVIOUS ONE.....
OF COURSE, I MAY BE WRONG, BUT IT'S TOO MUCH OF A COINCIDENCE. FOUR OF THEM DYING FROM THE SAME CAUSE --- MR. "E" HAD BETTER INVESTIGATE!
THAT MAN IS THE WEALTHY SPORTSMAN--- VICTOR JAY
WHO IN REALITY IS MR. "E"-- THE ENEMY OF THE UNDERWORLD--
I'VE LEARNED THAT THE FOUR MEN WHO DIED WERE SILENT PARTNERS IN THE SNEAD OIL COMPANY. I'LL DROP IN AND SEE IF J.P. SNEAD, HIMSELF, CAN THROW ANY LIGHT ON THE CASE
HERE WE ARE! THERE'S A LIGHT IN THE LIBRARY-- I GUESS OLD SNEAD IS WORKING LATE TONIGHT.

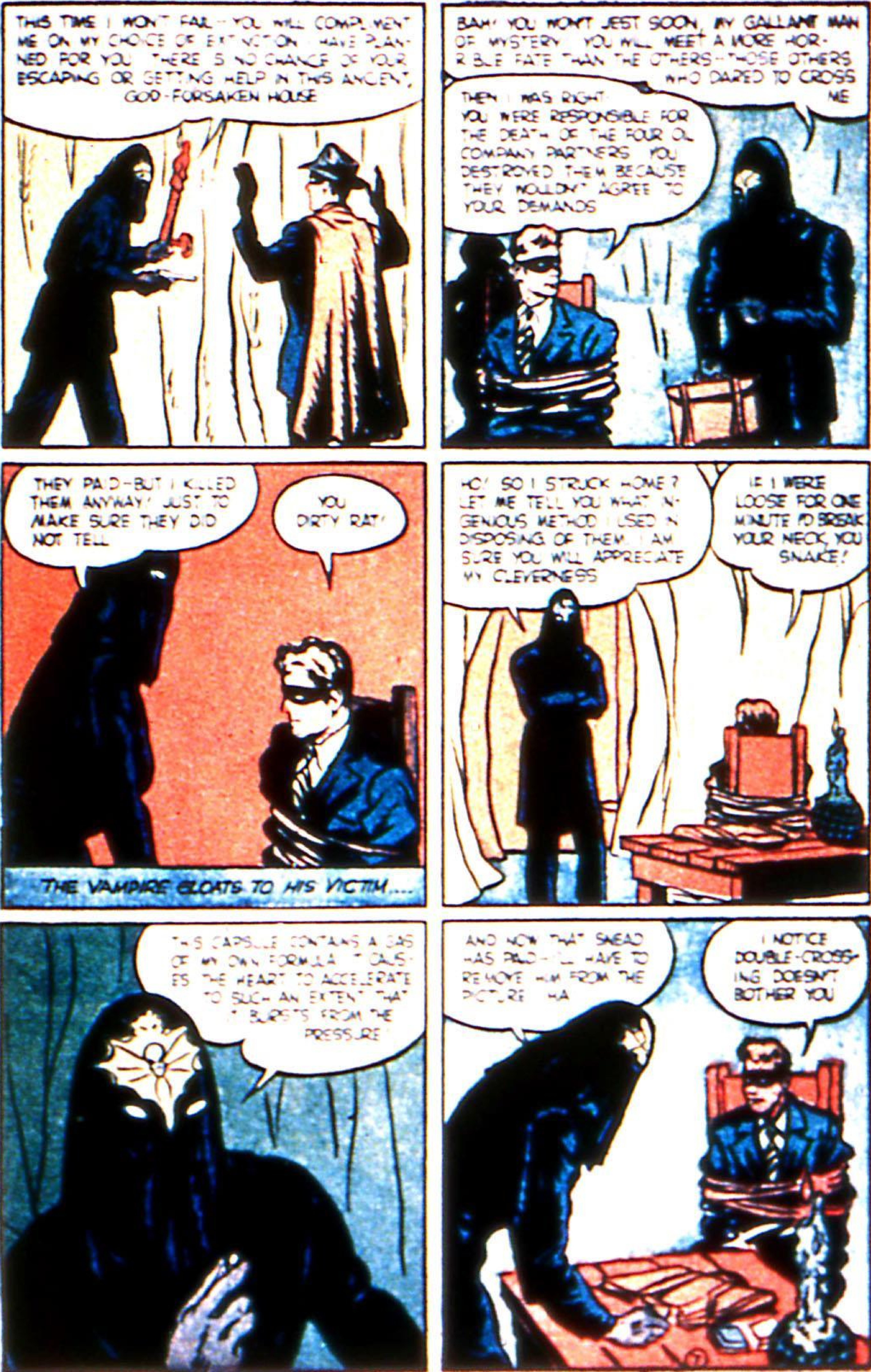

THE MAN IS MAD--- HE'S MAD! BUT I'LL HAVE TO FOLLOW HIS INSTRUCTIONS
THE OLD BOY SEEMS WORRIED I'D LIKE TO SEE THAT NOTE
I'VE GOT TO FOLLOW HIS ORDERS--- OR--- I'M NEXT
HOLY SMOKE! HE THREW IT IN THE FIRE---I'LL HAVE TO ACT FAST!
SORRY!
WITH THE SUDDENNESS OF A GUST OF WIND THE MASKED FIGURE DASHES INTO THE ROOM TO RETRIEVE THE PARTLY BURNED NOTE, AND LEAPS AWAY KNOCKING THE ASTONISHED BANKER TO THE FLOOR IN HIS WAKE

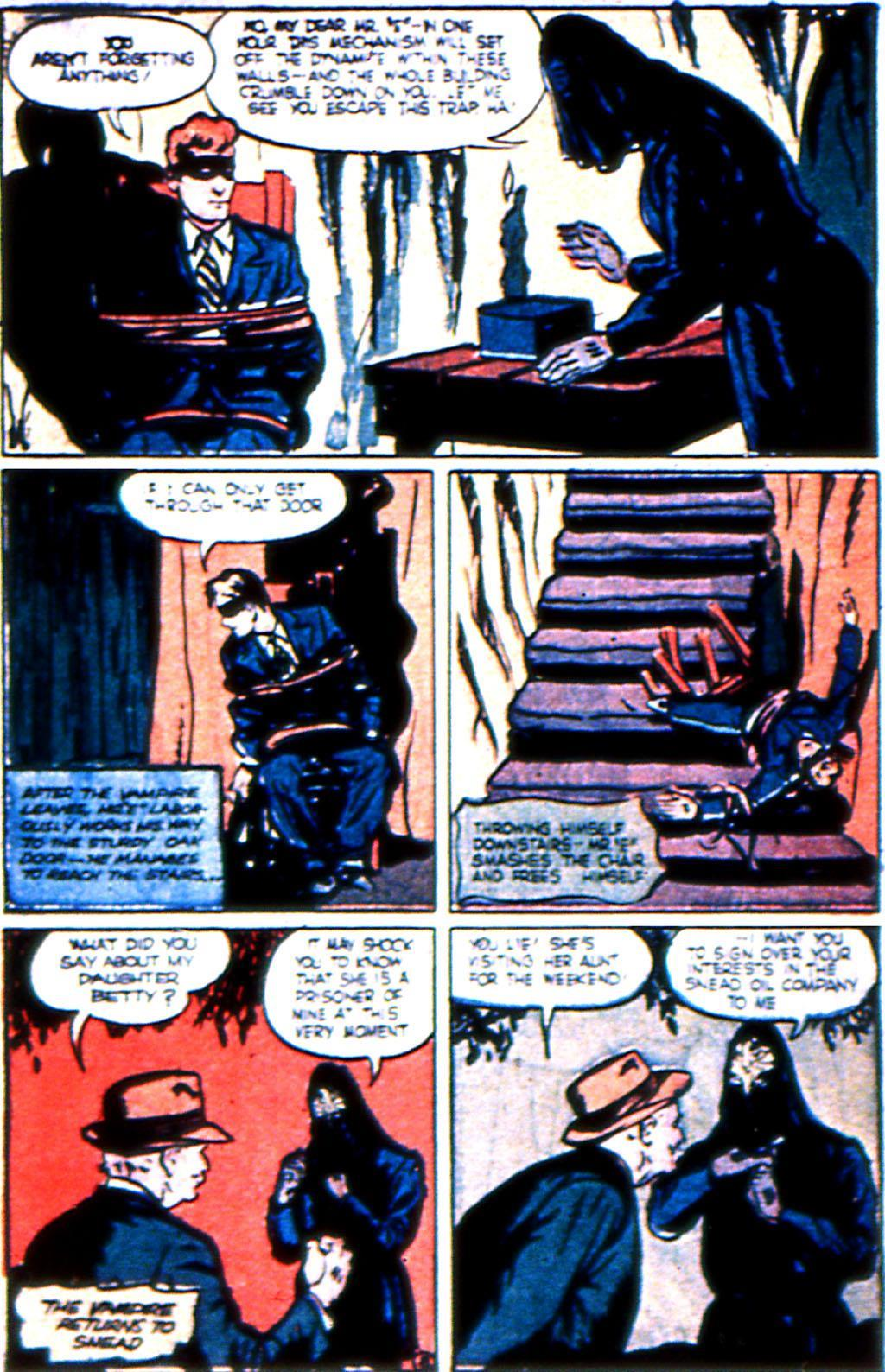

IF YOU KNOW WHATS GOOD
ONE MILLIUN DULLARS NEX
IDAY MIDNIGHT AT THE COR
DON T TELL POLICE IF YO
OF DEATH.....
HM! SO SOMEONE IS HOLDING OLD SNEAD UP FOR BLACKMAIL— THERE ISN'T ENOUGH OF THE NOTE LEFT TO GIVE ANY CLUES, BUT---
WHOEVER IT IS, ISN'T ANY PIKER--- ASKING A MILLION SMACKERS!
SNEAD HAS TO GET THE MONEY UP BY FRIDAY MIDNIGHT ACCORDING TO THE NOTE ---GOSH! THAT CAR IS GETTING KIND OF CLOSE ---- WHAT'S HE TRYING TO---- HEY!
SUDDENLY FORCED OFF THE ROAD--- MR. "E'S' CAR PLUNGES INTO THE MURKY WATER....

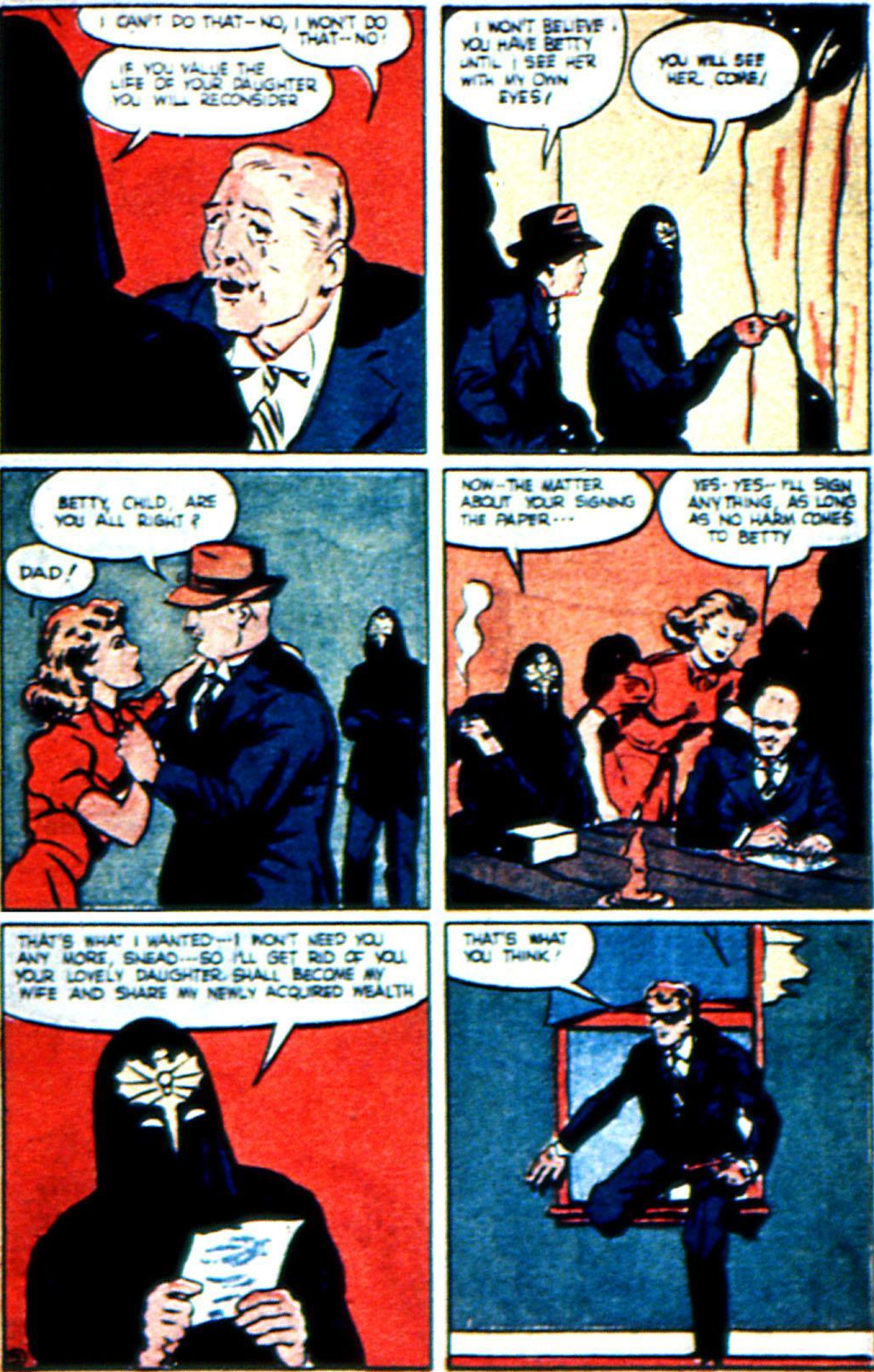

SLOWLY SINKING INTO THE DARK SOFT MUD THERE IS NO SIGN OF LIFE ABOUT THE ILL-FATED MACHINE........
THE OTHER CAR STOPS AND FROM IT A DARK FIGURE STEPS OUT AND STEALTHILY APPROACHES THE WATER EDGE.......
AH! NO ONE COULD HAVE SURVIVED THAT FALL---NOT EVEN THE SO GREAT MR. "E"--RIGHT NOW HIS CURSED BODY REPOSES IN THAT SLIME AT THE RIVER BOTTOM
NOW THAT I HAVE EVENED SCORES WITH THE MEDDLESOME MR "E" I'LL GET BACK TO MY UNFINISHED BUSINESS WITH THE BLOATED MR. SNEAD. HA
H-I SEE I'M PITTED UP AGAINST MY OLD ARCH-ENEMY AGAIN....... THE VAMPIRE!!

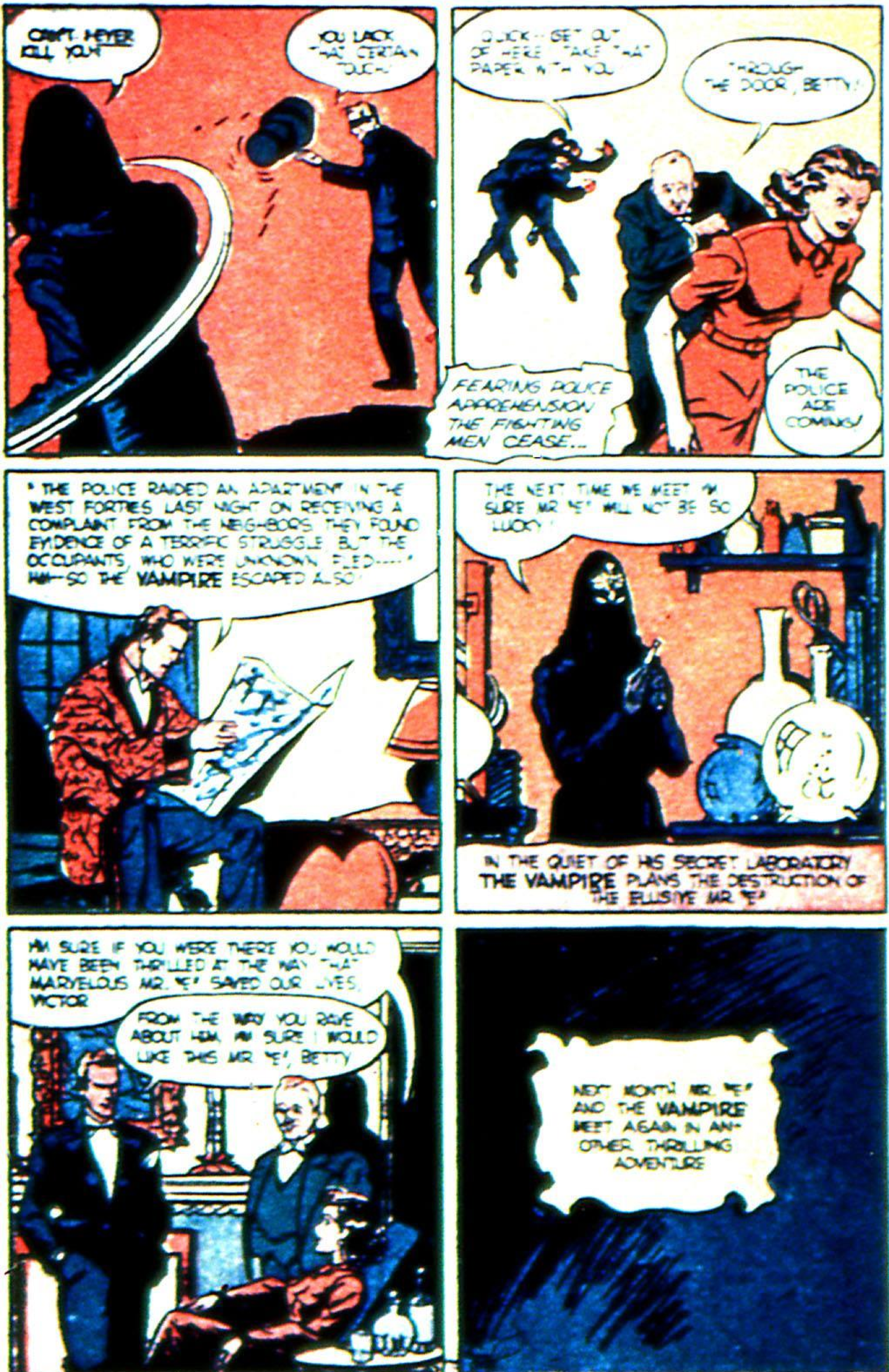

IT WILL BE EASIER FOR ME TO WORK NOW THAT THE VAMPIRE THINKS I'M DEAD
THE NOTE SAYS ONE MILLION DOLLARS IS TO BE PAID FRIDAY MIDNIGHT... THAT'S TONIGHT--- I'LL HAVE ACT FAST !!
BACK AT THE SNEAD ESTATE---
I'VE GOT A HUNCH SNEAD WILL ACT AS HIS OWN MESSENGER TO DELIVER THE MONEY. HE SHOULD BE LEAVING SOON TO KEEP HIS APPOINTMENT WITH THE VAMPIRE
I WAS RIGHT--- HERE HE COMES !

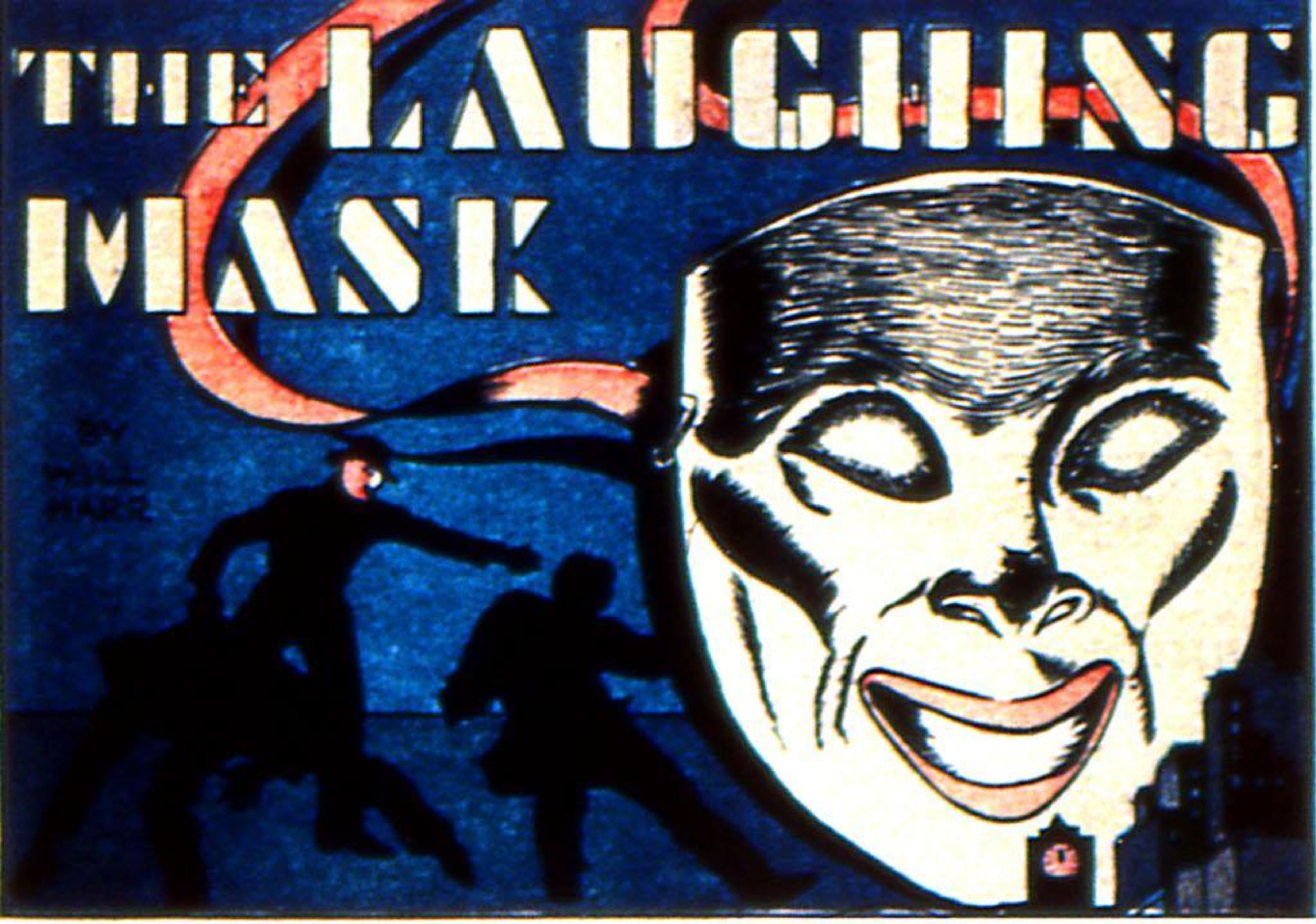

PERCHED ON TOP OF THE SPEEDING CAR MR. "E" MANAGES TO ESCAPE DETECTION. SOON THE CAR TURNS INTO A SIDE STREET.....
SO THIS IS THE VAMPIRE'S HANG-OUT! HERE'S WHERE I TAKE HIM BY SURPRISE!
ON THE CONTRARY, MY DEAR MR. "E", HERE'S WHERE I TAKE YOU BY SURPRISE!
I WAS SURE YOU WERE FINISHED IN THAT UNFORTUNATE ACCIDENT--- BUT YOU SEEM TO HAVE MORE LIVES THAN A CAT--- SO I'LL HAVE TO TRY A MORE SUBSTANTIAL METHOD OF REMOVING YOU FROM MY WAY

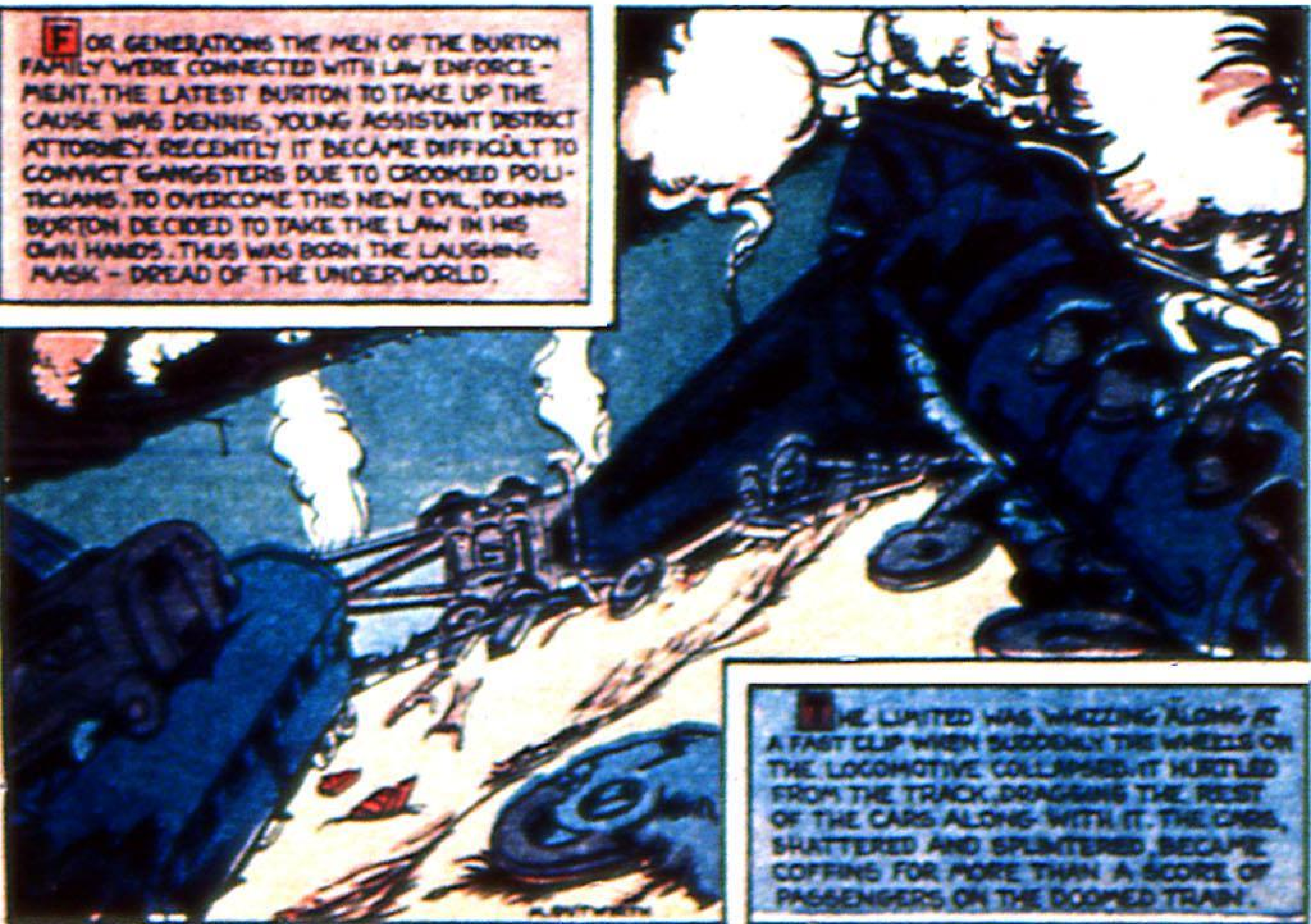

THIS TIME I WON'T FAIL—YOU WILL COMPLIMENT ME ON MY CHOICE OF EXTINCTION I HAVE PLANNED FOR YOU. THERE IS NO CHANCE OF YOUR ESCAPING OR GETTING HELP IN THIS ANCIENT, GOD-FORSAKEN HOUSE
BAH! YOU WON'T JEST SOON, MY GALLANT MAN OF MYSTERY. YOU WILL MEET A MORE HORRIBLE FATE THAN THE OTHERS—THOSE OTHERS WHO DARED TO CROSS ME
THEN I WAS RIGHT! YOU WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATH OF THE FOUR OIL COMPANY PARTNERS. YOU DESTROYED THEM BECAUSE THEY WOULDN'T AGREE TO YOUR DEMANDS
THEY PAID—BUT I KILLED THEM ANYWAY! JUST TO MAKE SURE THEY DID NOT TELL
YOU DIRTY RAT!
THE VAMPIRE GLOATS TO HIS VICTIM....
HO! SO I STRUCK HOME? LET ME TELL YOU WHAT INGENIOUS METHOD I USED IN DISPOSING OF THEM. I AM SURE YOU WILL APPRECIATE MY CLEVERNESS
IF I WERE LOOSE FOR ONE MINUTE I'D BREAK YOUR NECK, YOU SNAKE!
THIS CAPSULE CONTAINS A GAS OF MY OWN FORMULA. IT CAUSES THE HEART TO ACCELERATE TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT IT BURSTS FROM THE PRESSURE!
AND NOW THAT SNEAD HAS PAID—I'LL HAVE TO REMOVE HIM FROM THE PICTURE. HA
I NOTICE DOUBLE-CROSSING DOESN'T BOTHER YOU

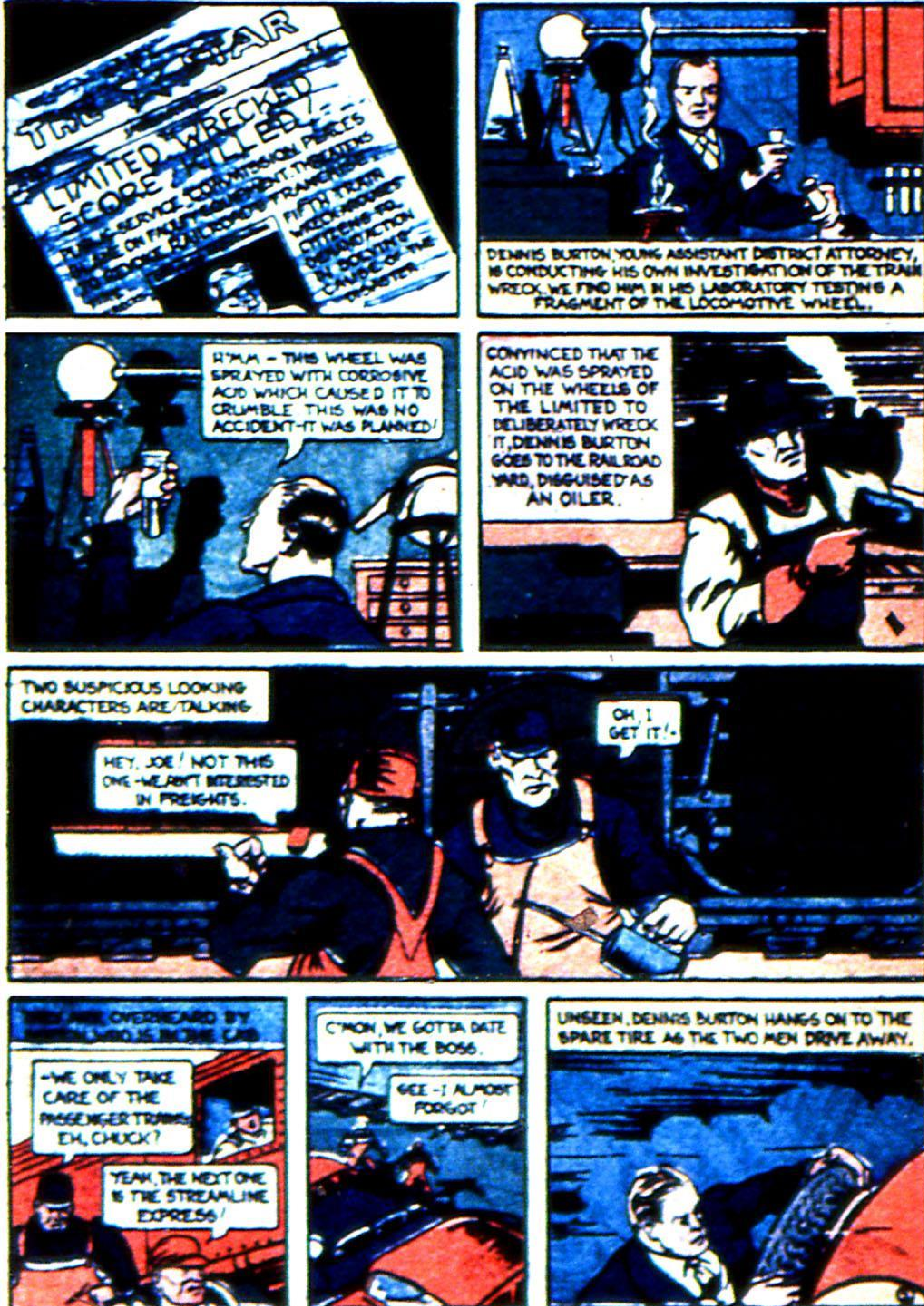

YOU AREN'T FORGETTING ANYTHING!
NO, MY DEAR MR. "E"—IN ONE HOUR THIS MECHANISM WILL SET OFF THE DYNAMITE WITHIN THESE WALLS—AND THE WHOLE BUILDING CRUMBLE DOWN ON YOU... LET ME SEE YOU ESCAPE THIS TRAP. HA!
IF I CAN ONLY GET THROUGH THAT DOOR
AFTER THE VAMPIRE LEAVES, MR. "E" LABORIOUSLY WORKS HIS WAY TO THE STURDY OAK DOOR—HE MANAGES TO REACH THE STAIRS...
THROWING HIMSELF DOWNSTAIRS—MR. "E" SMASHES THE CHAIR AND FREES HIMSELF
WHAT DID YOU SAY ABOUT MY DAUGHTER BETTY?
IT MAY SHOCK YOU TO KNOW THAT SHE IS A PRISONER OF MINE AT THIS VERY MOMENT
THE VAMPIRE RETURNS TO SNEAD
YOU LIE! SHE'S VISITING HER AUNT FOR THE WEEKEND!
—I WANT YOU TO SIGN OVER YOUR INTERESTS IN THE SNEAD OIL COMPANY TO ME

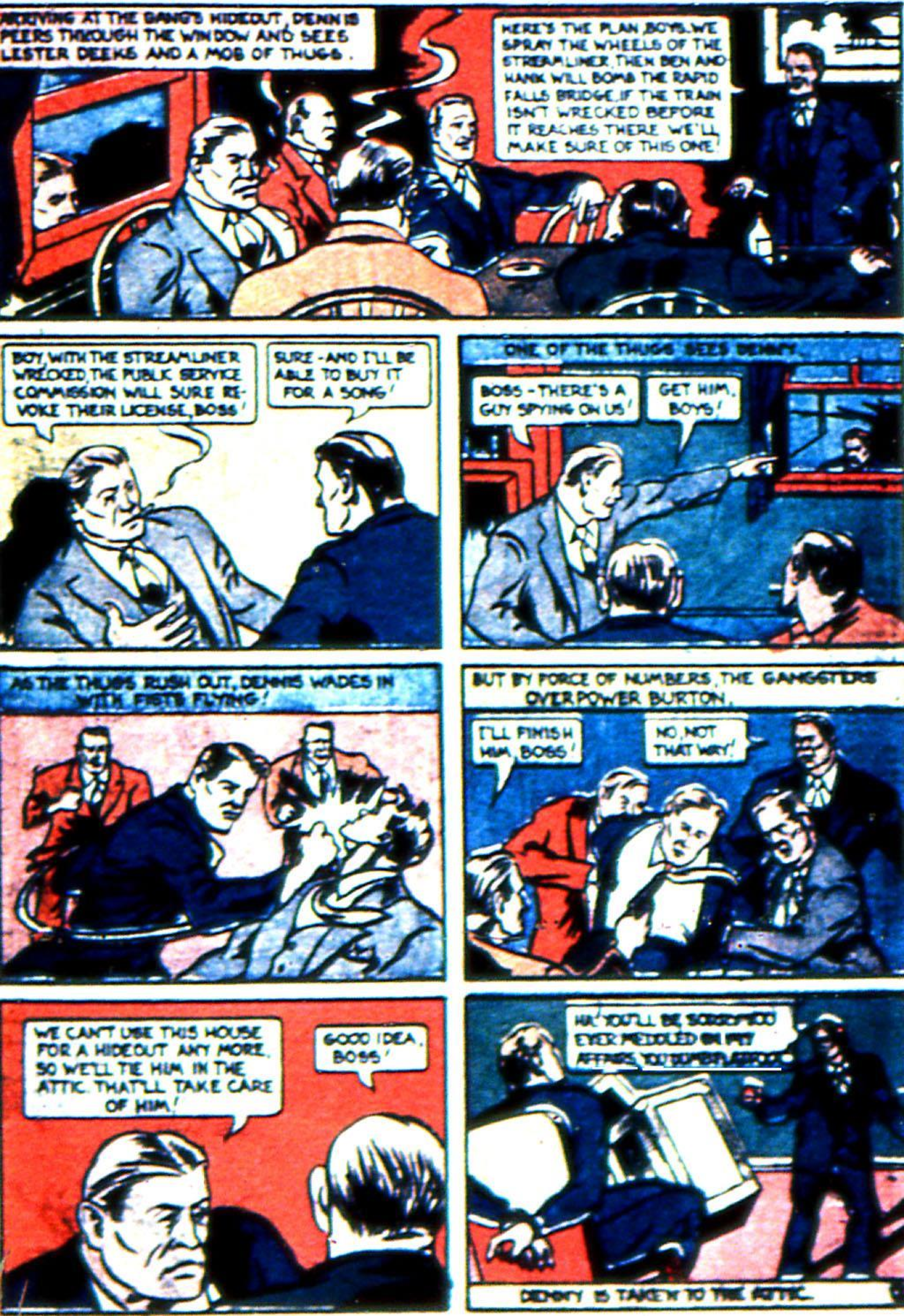

I CAN'T DO THAT--NO, I WON'T DO THAT--NO!
IF YOU VALUE THE LIFE OF YOUR DAUGHTER YOU WILL RECONSIDER
I WON'T BELIEVE YOU HAVE BETTY UNTIL I SEE HER WITH MY OWN EYES!
YOU WILL SEE HER. COME!
BETTY, CHILD, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
DAD!
NOW--THE MATTER ABOUT YOUR SIGNING THE PAPER...
YES-YES--I'LL SIGN ANYTHING, AS LONG AS NO HARM COMES TO BETTY
THAT'S WHAT I WANTED---I WON'T NEED YOU ANY MORE, SNEAD---SO I'LL GET RID OF YOU. YOUR LOVELY DAUGHTER SHALL BECOME MY WIFE AND SHARE MY NEWLY ACQUIRED WEALTH
THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK!

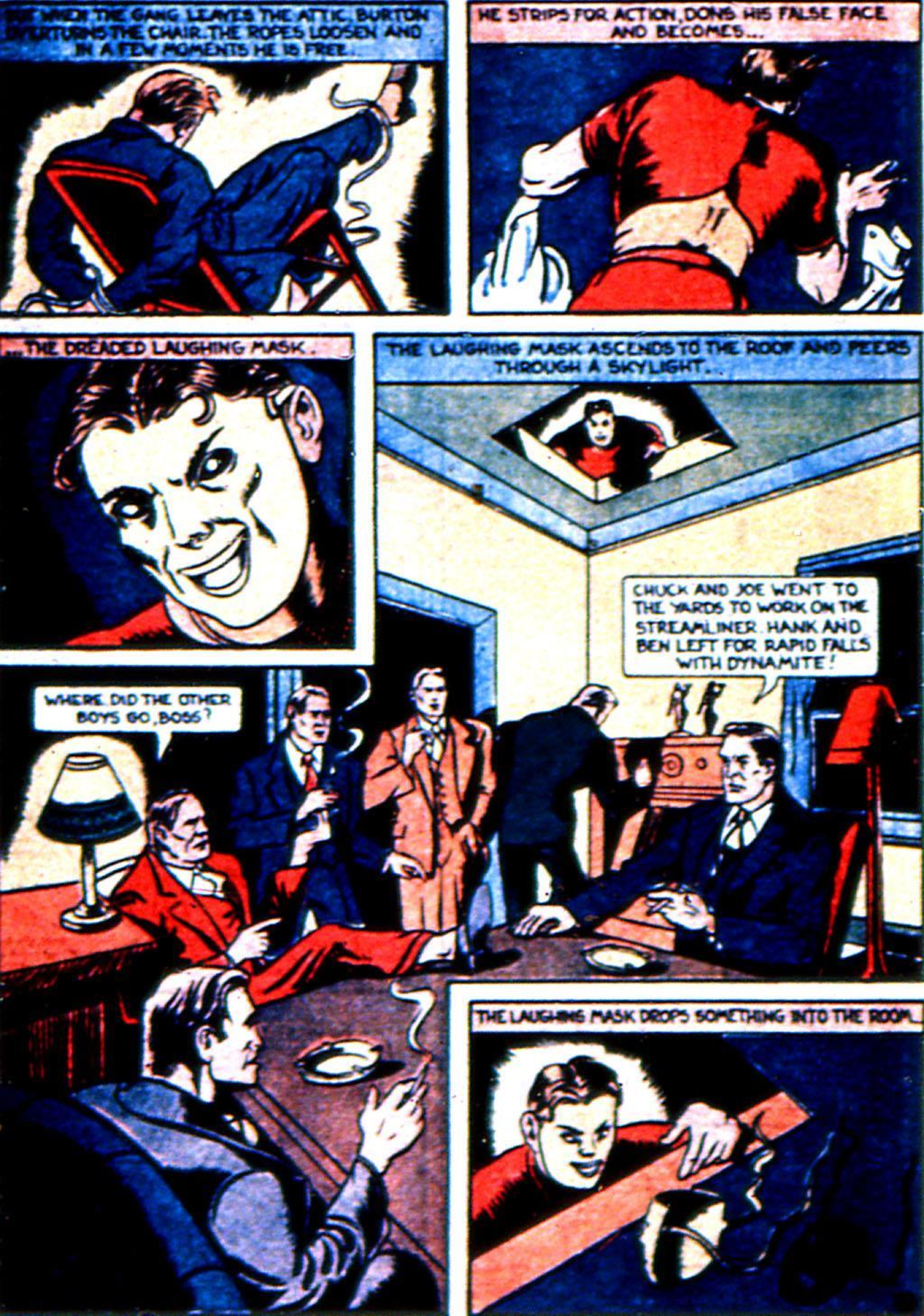

CAN'T NEVER KILL YOU!
YOU LACK THAT CERTAIN TOUCH!
QUICK -- GET OUT OF HERE! TAKE THAT PAPER WITH YOU!
THROUGH THE DOOR, BETTY!
FEARING POLICE APPREHENSION THE FIGHTING MEN CEASE...
THE POLICE ARE COMING!
"THE POLICE RAIDED AN APARTMENT IN THE WEST FORTIES LAST NIGHT ON RECEIVING A COMPLAINT FROM THE NEIGHBORS. THEY FOUND EVIDENCE OF A TERRIFIC STRUGGLE, BUT THE OCCUPANTS, WHO WERE UNKNOWN, FLED....." HM--SO THE VAMPIRE ESCAPED ALSO!
THE NEXT TIME WE MEET I'M SURE MR "E" WILL NOT BE SO LUCKY!
IN THE QUIET OF HIS SECRET LABORATORY THE VAMPIRE PLANS THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ELUSIVE MR "E"
I'M SURE IF YOU WERE THERE YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN THRILLED AT THE WAY THAT MARVELOUS MR. "E" SAVED OUR LIVES, VICTOR
FROM THE WAY YOU RAVE ABOUT HIM, I'M SURE I WOULD LIKE THIS MR "E", BETTY
NEXT MONTH MR "E" AND THE VAMPIRE MEET AGAIN IN ANOTHER THRILLING ADVENTURE

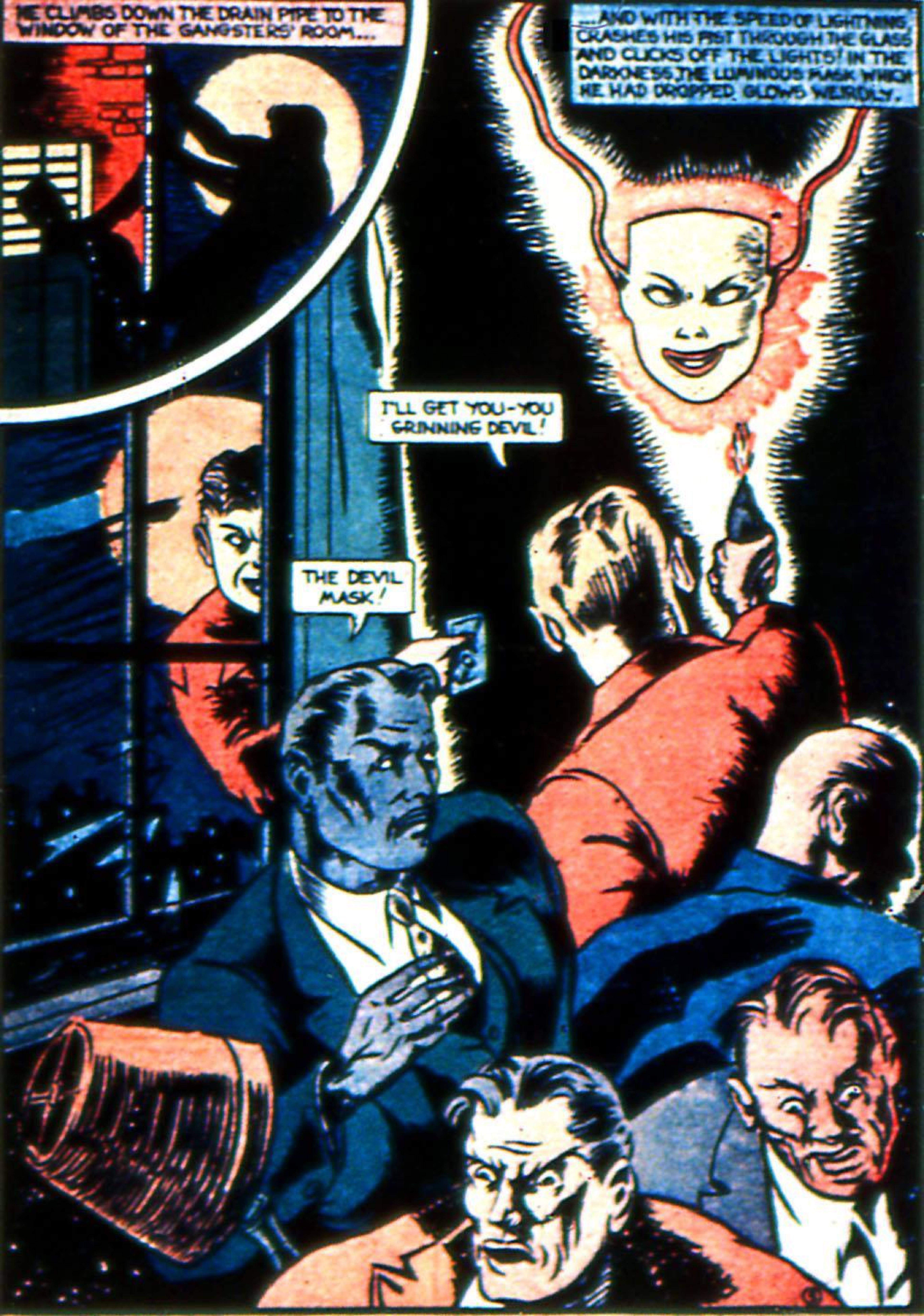

THE LAUGHING MASK
BY WILL HARR

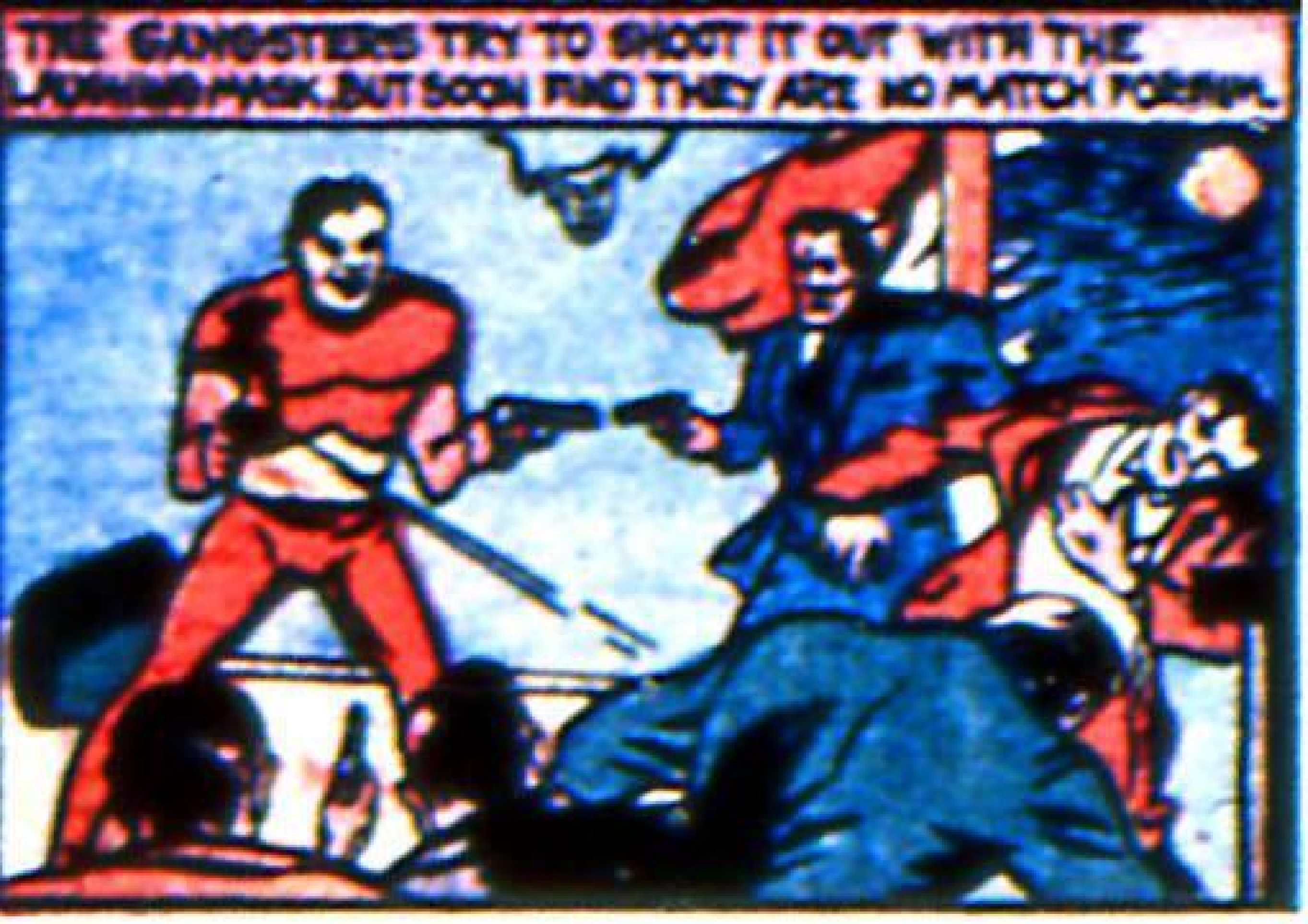

FOR GENERATIONS THE MEN OF THE BURTON FAMILY WERE CONNECTED WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT. THE LATEST BURTON TO TAKE UP THE CAUSE WAS DENNIS, YOUNG ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY. RECENTLY IT BECAME DIFFICULT TO CONVICT GANGSTERS DUE TO CROOKED POLITICIANS. TO OVERCOME THIS NEW EVIL, DENNIS BURTON DECIDED TO TAKE THE LAW IN HIS OWN HANDS. THUS WAS BORN THE LAUGHING MASK – DREAD OF THE UNDERWORLD.
THE LIMITED WAS WHIZZING ALONG AT A FAST CLIP WHEN SUDDENLY THE WHEELS ON THE LOCOMOTIVE COLLAPSED. IT HURTLED FROM THE TRACK, DRAGGING THE REST OF THE CARS ALONG WITH IT. THE CARS, SHATTERED AND SPLINTERED, BECAME COFFINS FOR MORE THAN A SCORE OF PASSENGERS ON THE DOOMED TRAIN.

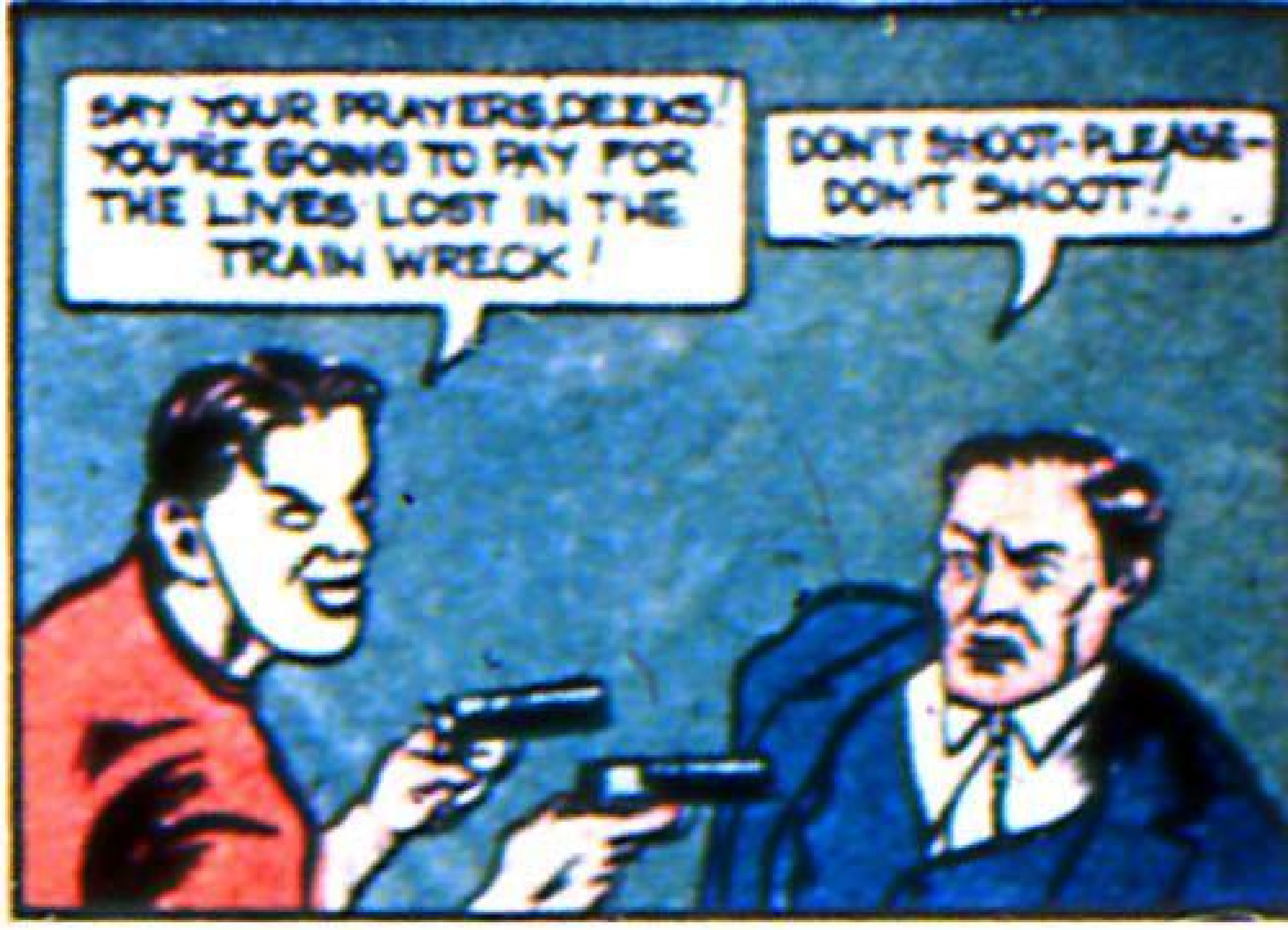

THE STAR
LIMITED WRECKED
SCORE KILLED!
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION PIERCES BLAME ON FAULTY EQUIPMENT, THREATENS TO REVOKE RAILROAD'S FRANCHISE
FIFTH TRAIN WRECK [illegible] CITIZENS [illegible] DEMAND ACTION BY [illegible] CAUSE OF THE DISASTER
DENNIS BURTON, YOUNG ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY, IS CONDUCTING HIS OWN INVESTIGATION OF THE TRAIN WRECK. WE FIND HIM IN HIS LABORATORY TESTING A FRAGMENT OF THE LOCOMOTIVE WHEEL.
H'MM — THIS WHEEL WAS SPRAYED WITH CORROSIVE ACID WHICH CAUSED IT TO CRUMBLE. THIS WAS NO ACCIDENT—IT WAS PLANNED!
CONVINCED THAT THE ACID WAS SPRAYED ON THE WHEELS OF THE LIMITED TO DELIBERATELY WRECK IT, DENNIS BURTON GOES TO THE RAILROAD YARD, DISGUISED AS AN OILER.
TWO SUSPICIOUS LOOKING CHARACTERS ARE TALKING
HEY, JOE! NOT THIS ONE—WE AIN'T INTERESTED IN FREIGHTS.
OH, I GET IT!—
[illegible] OVERHEARD BY [illegible]
—WE ONLY TAKE CARE OF THE PASSENGER TRAINS, EH, CHUCK?
YEAH, THE NEXT ONE IS THE STREAMLINE EXPRESS!
C'MON, WE GOTTA DATE WITH THE BOSS.
GEE—I ALMOST FORGOT!
UNSEEN, DENNIS BURTON HANGS ON TO THE SPARE TIRE AS THE TWO MEN DRIVE AWAY.

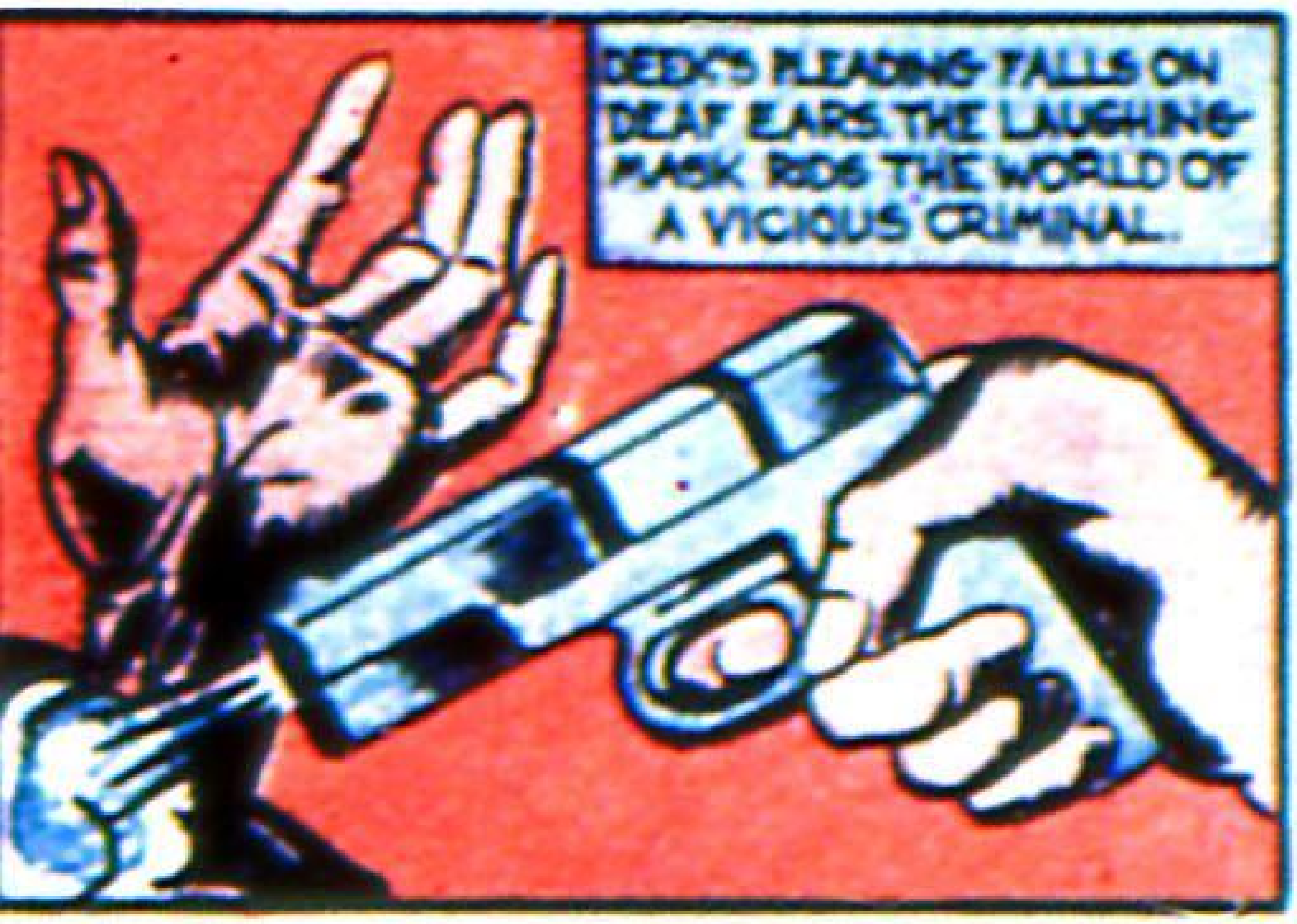

ARRIVING AT THE GANG'S HIDEOUT, DENNIS PEERS THROUGH THE WINDOW AND SEES LESTER DEEKS AND A MOB OF THUGS.
HERE'S THE PLAN BOYS. WE SPRAY THE WHEELS OF THE STREAMLINER, THEN BEN AND HANK WILL BOMB THE RAPID FALLS BRIDGE. IF THE TRAIN ISN'T WRECKED BEFORE IT REACHES THERE WE'LL MAKE SURE OF THIS ONE!
BOY, WITH THE STREAMLINER WRECKED, THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION WILL SURE REVOKE THEIR LICENSE, BOSS!
SURE - AND I'LL BE ABLE TO BUY IT FOR A SONG!
ONE OF THE THUGS SEES DENNY.
BOSS - THERE'S A GUY SPYING ON US!
GET HIM, BOYS!
AS THE THUGS RUSH OUT, DENNIS WADES IN WITH FISTS FLYING!
BUT BY FORCE OF NUMBERS, THE GANGSTERS OVERPOWER BURTON.
I'LL FINISH HIM, BOSS!
NO, NOT THAT WAY!
WE CAN'T USE THIS HOUSE FOR A HIDEOUT ANY MORE, SO WE'LL TIE HIM IN THE ATTIC. THAT'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM!
GOOD IDEA, BOSS!
HA! YOU'LL BE SORRY YOU EVER MEDDLED IN MY AFFAIRS, YOU [illegible]
DENNY IS TAKEN TO THE ATTIC.

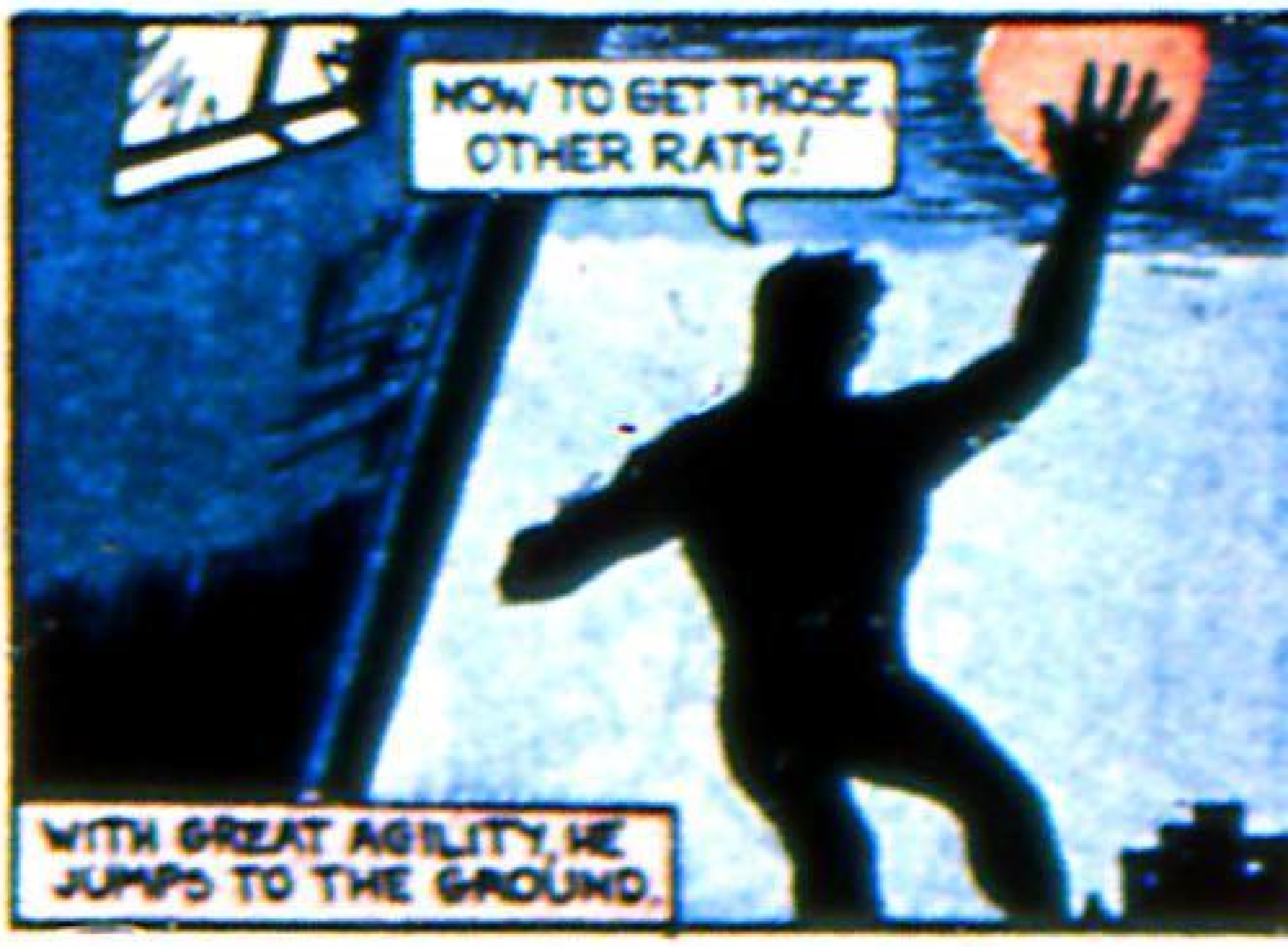

BUT WHEN THE GANG LEAVES THE ATTIC, BURTON OVERTURNS THE CHAIR. THE ROPES LOOSEN AND IN A FEW MOMENTS HE IS FREE...
HE STRIPS FOR ACTION, DONS HIS FALSE FACE AND BECOMES...
...THE DREADED LAUGHING MASK.
THE LAUGHING MASK ASCENDS TO THE ROOF AND PEERS THROUGH A SKYLIGHT...
WHERE DID THE OTHER BOYS GO, BOSS?
CHUCK AND JOE WENT TO THE YARDS TO WORK ON THE STREAMLINER. HANK AND BEN LEFT FOR RAPID FALLS WITH DYNAMITE!
THE LAUGHING MASK DROPS SOMETHING INTO THE ROOM...

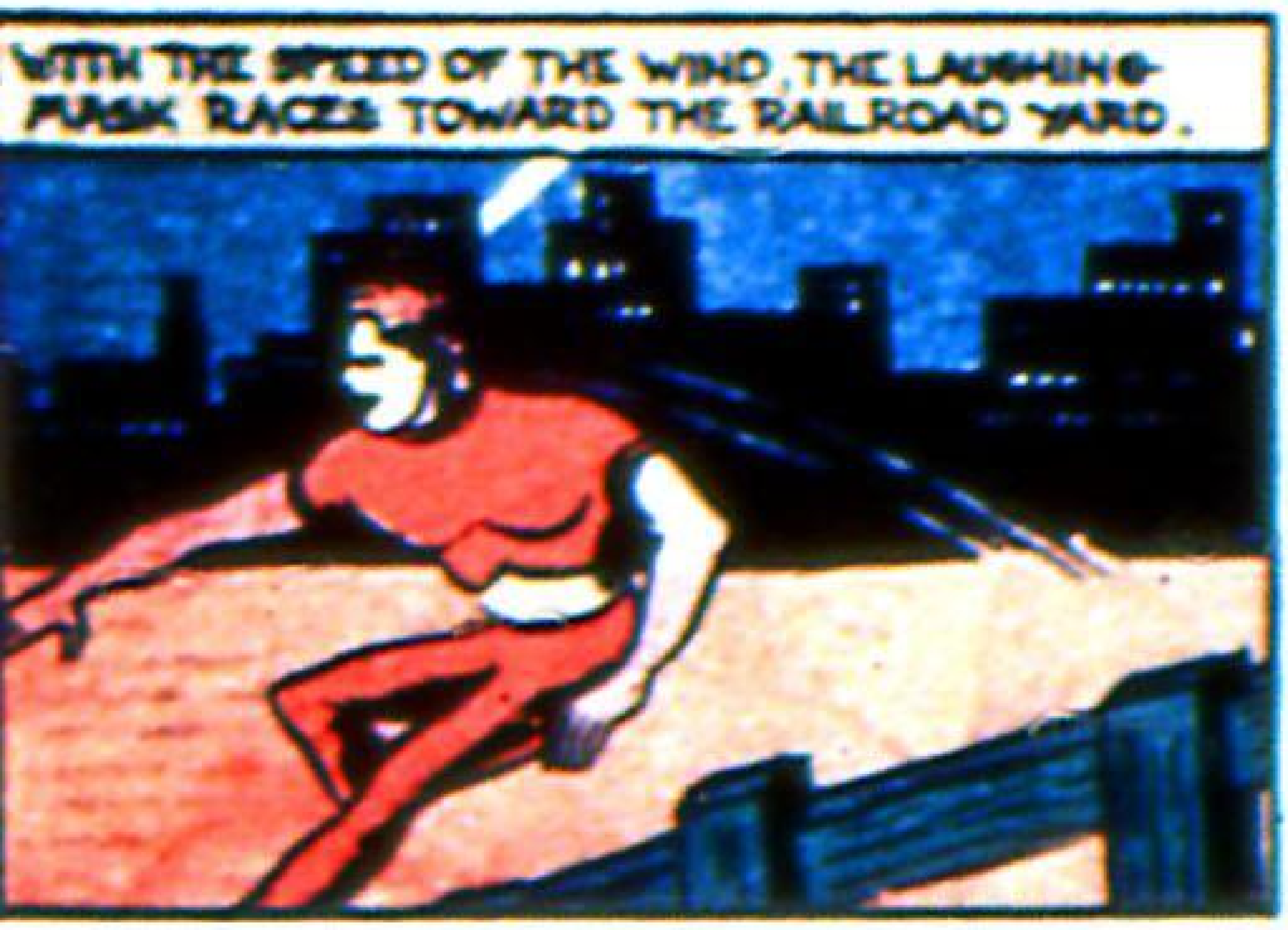

HE CLIMBS DOWN THE DRAIN PIPE TO THE WINDOW OF THE GANGSTERS' ROOM...
...AND WITH THE SPEED OF LIGHTNING CRASHES HIS FIST THROUGH THE GLASS AND CLICKS OFF THE LIGHTS! IN THE DARKNESS THE LUMINOUS MASK WHICH HE HAD DROPPED GLOWS WEIRDLY.
I'LL GET YOU-YOU GRINNING DEVIL!
THE DEVIL MASK!

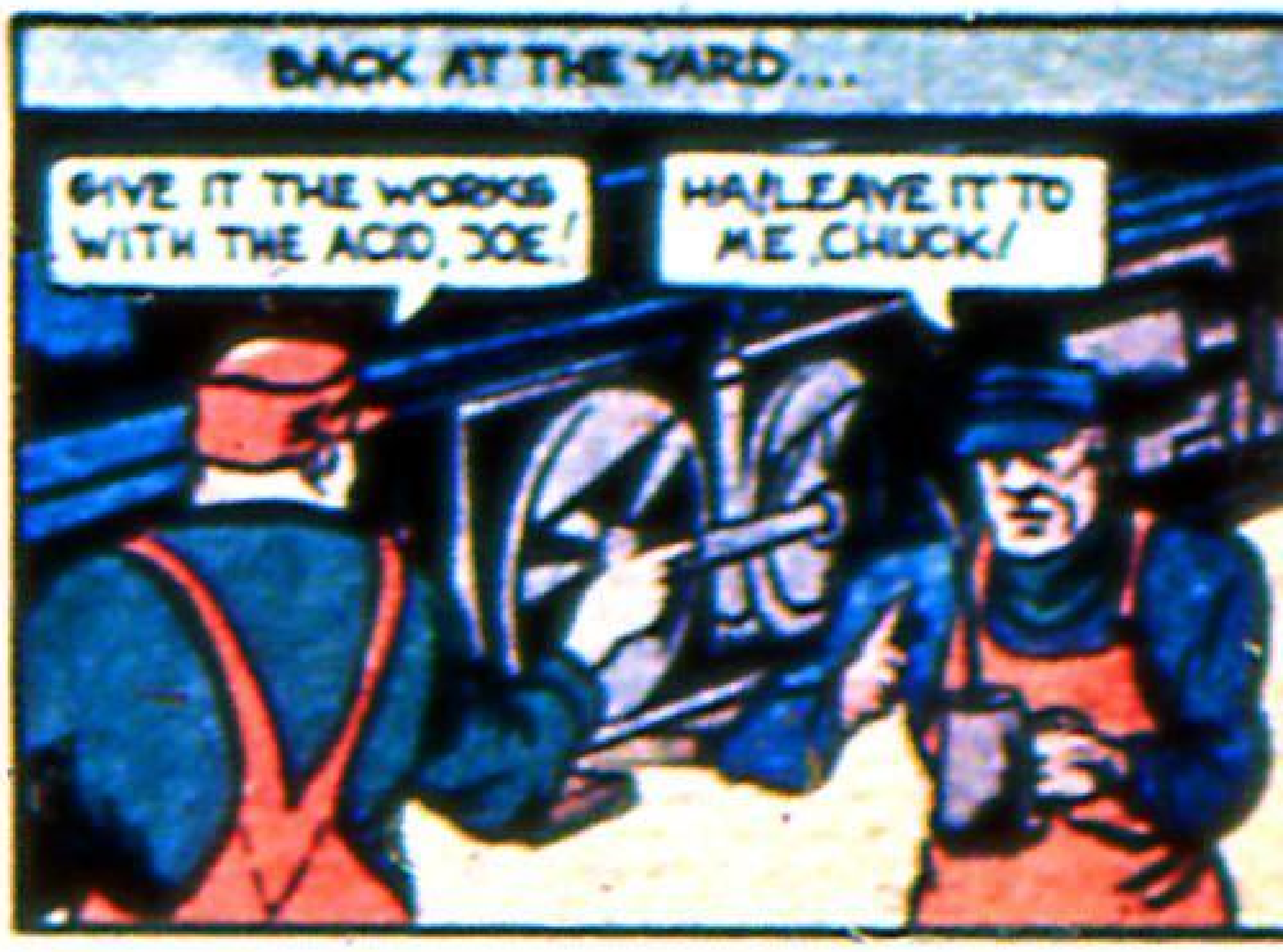

THE GANGSTERS TRY TO SHOOT IT OUT WITH THE LAUGHING MASK, BUT SOON FIND THEY ARE NO MATCH FOR HIM.

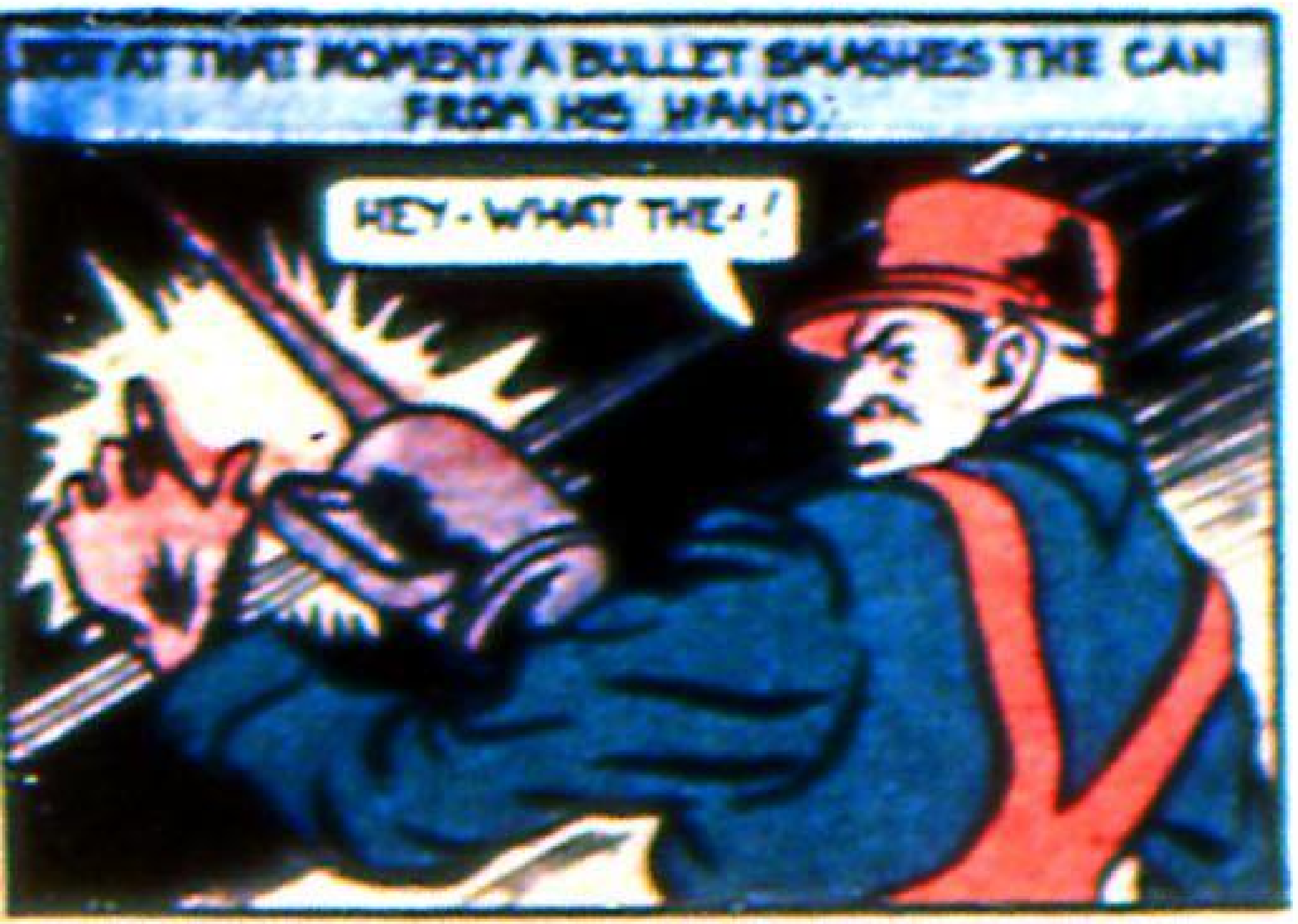

SAY YOUR PRAYERS, DEEKS! YOU'RE GOING TO PAY FOR THE LIVES LOST IN THE TRAIN WRECK!
DON'T SHOOT-PLEASE-DON'T SHOOT!

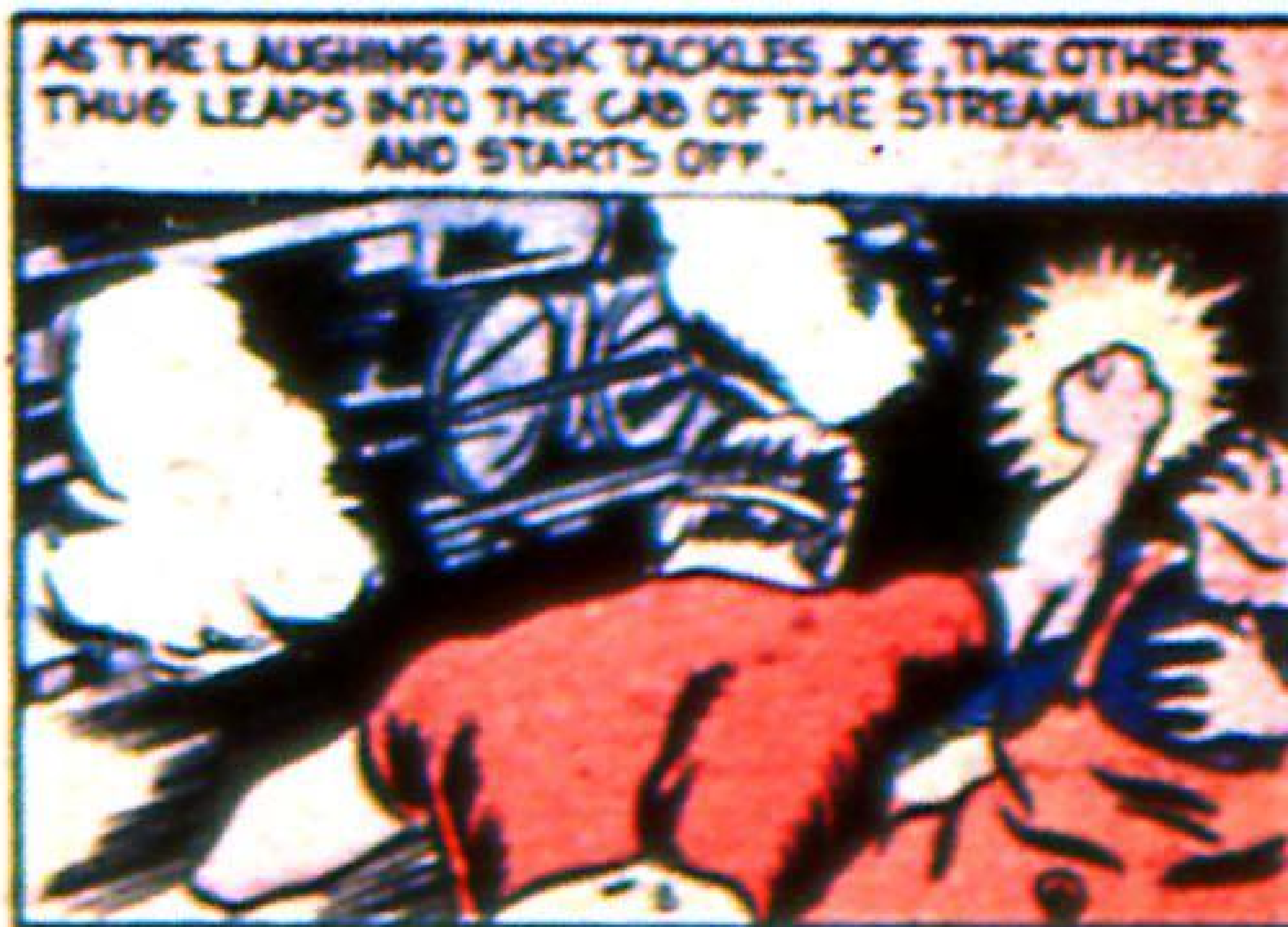

DEEKS'S PLEADING FALLS ON DEAF EARS. THE LAUGHING MASK RIDS THE WORLD OF A VICIOUS CRIMINAL.

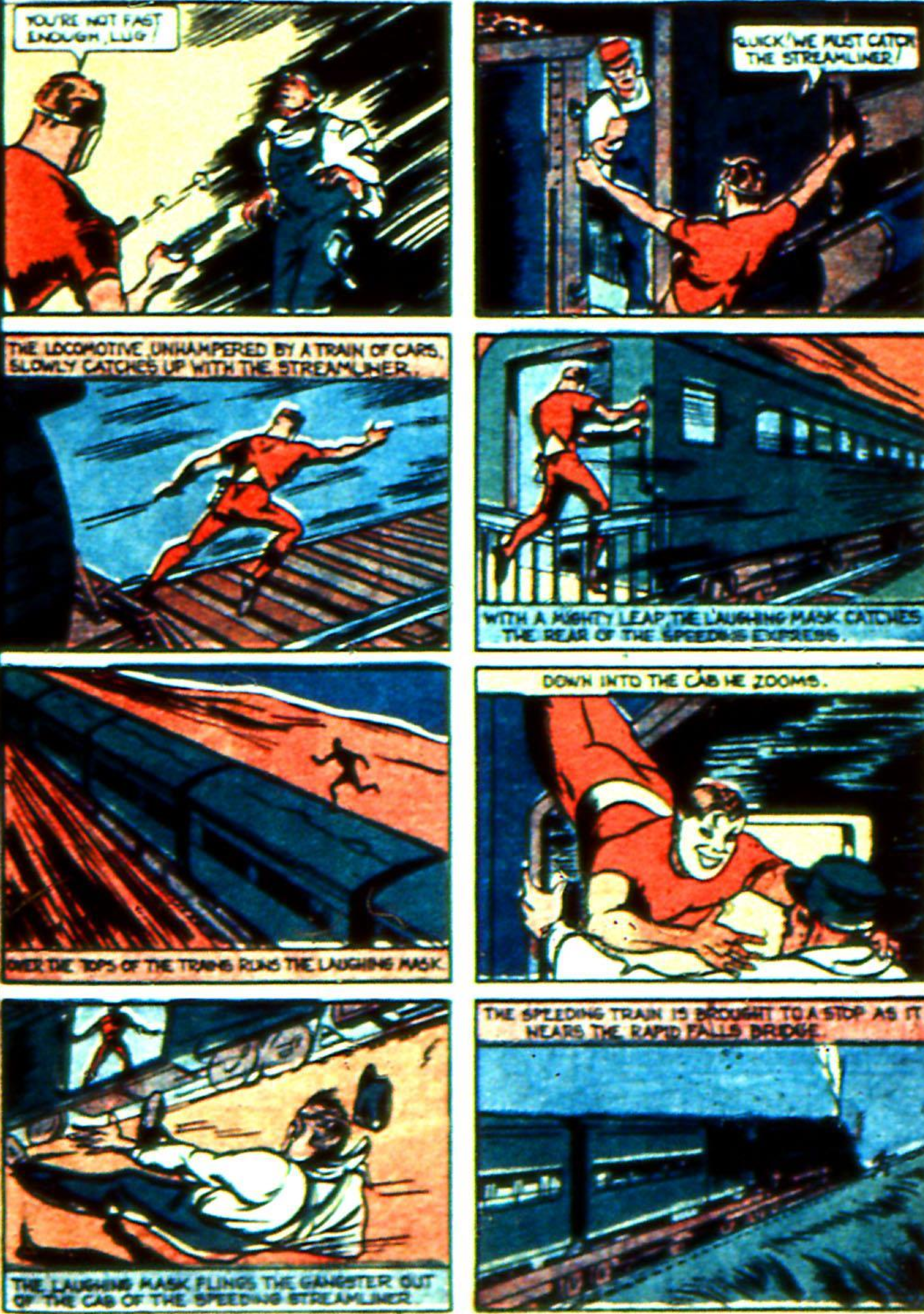

NOW TO GET THOSE OTHER RATS!
WITH GREAT AGILITY, HE JUMPS TO THE GROUND.

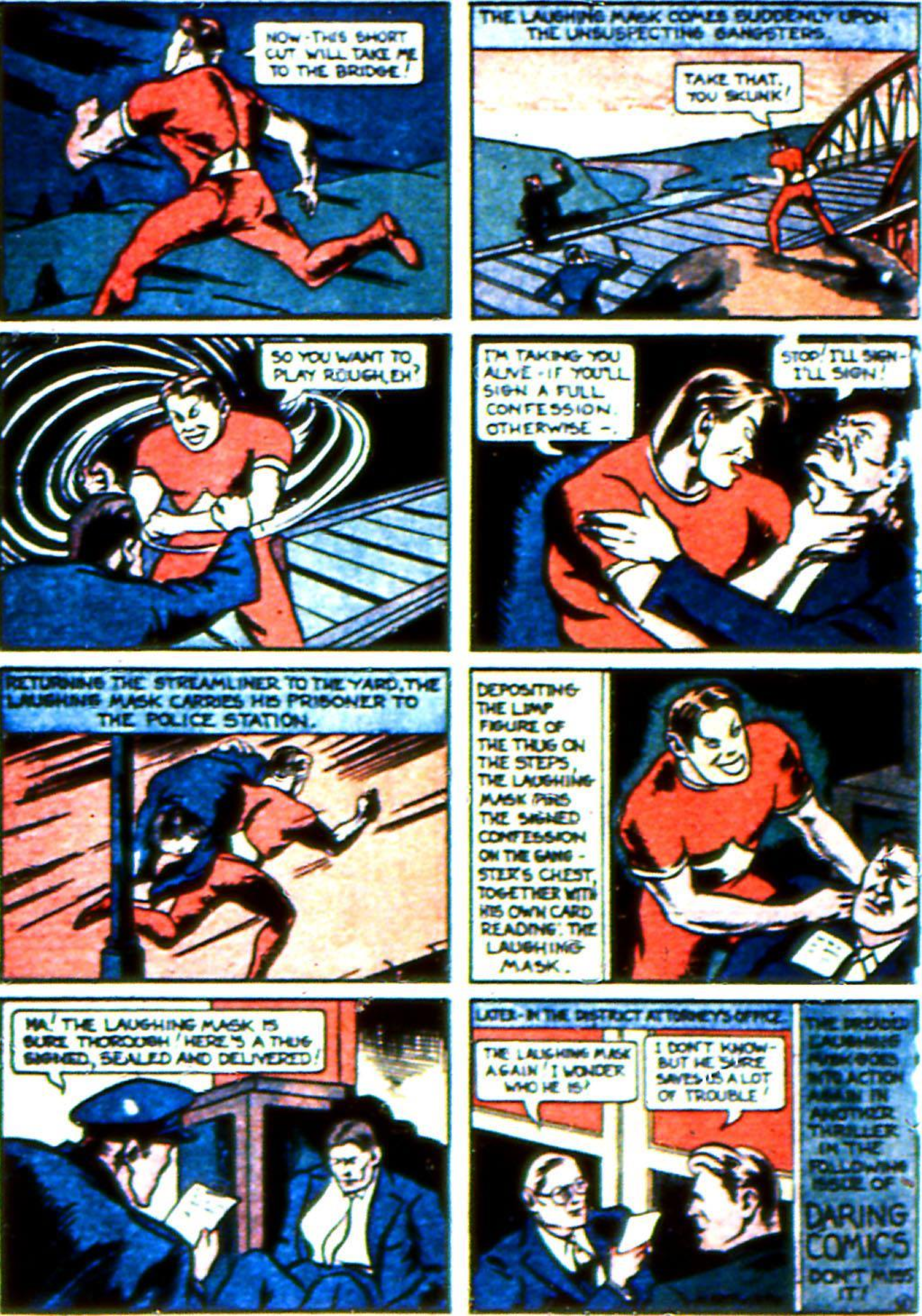

WITH THE SPEED OF THE WIND, THE LAUGHING MASK RACES TOWARD THE RAILROAD YARD.


BACK AT THE YARD...
GIVE IT THE WORKS WITH THE ACID, JOE!
HA! LEAVE IT TO ME, CHUCK!


BUT AT THAT MOMENT A BULLET SMASHES THE CAN FROM HIS HAND.
HEY-WHAT THE-!


AS THE LAUGHING MASK TACKLES JOE, THE OTHER THUG LEAPS INTO THE CAB OF THE STREAMLINER AND STARTS OFF.


YOU'RE NOT FAST ENOUGH, LUG!
QUICK! WE MUST CATCH THE STREAMLINER!
THE LOCOMOTIVE, UNHAMPERED BY A TRAIN OF CARS, SLOWLY CATCHES UP WITH THE STREAMLINER.
WITH A MIGHTY LEAP THE LAUGHING MASK CATCHES THE REAR OF THE SPEEDING EXPRESS.
OVER THE TOPS OF THE TRAINS RUNS THE LAUGHING MASK.
DOWN INTO THE CAB HE ZOOMS.
THE LAUGHING MASK FLINGS THE GANGSTER OUT OF THE CAB OF THE SPEEDING STREAMLINER.
THE SPEEDING TRAIN IS BROUGHT TO A STOP AS IT NEARS THE RAPID FALLS BRIDGE.


NOW - THIS SHORT CUT WILL TAKE ME TO THE BRIDGE!
THE LAUGHING MASK COMES SUDDENLY UPON THE UNSUSPECTING GANGSTERS.
TAKE THAT, YOU SKUNK!
SO YOU WANT TO PLAY ROUGH, EH?
I'M TAKING YOU ALIVE - IF YOU'LL SIGN A FULL CONFESSION. OTHERWISE -.
STOP! I'LL SIGN - I'LL SIGN!
RETURNING THE STREAMLINER TO THE YARD, THE LAUGHING MASK CARRIES HIS PRISONER TO THE POLICE STATION.
DEPOSITING THE LIMP FIGURE OF THE THUG ON THE STEPS, THE LAUGHING MASK PINS THE SIGNED CONFESSION ON THE GANGSTER'S CHEST, TOGETHER WITH HIS OWN CARD READING: THE LAUGHING MASK.
HA! THE LAUGHING MASK IS SURE THOROUGH! HERE'S A THUG SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED!
LATER - IN THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
THE LAUGHING MASK AGAIN! I WONDER WHO HE IS?
I DON'T KNOW - BUT HE SURE SAVES US A LOT OF TROUBLE!
THE DREADED LAUGHING MASK GOES INTO ACTION AGAIN IN ANOTHER THRILLER IN THE FOLLOWING ISSUE OF
DARING COMICS
DON'T MISS IT!

DIVING SUBMARINE ONLY $1.19

POWERFUL

ADJUSTABLE DIVING FINS

$1.19

RUSH 25¢ FOR 604 PAGE CATALOG of AMAZING NOVELTIES

7000 Amazing Sensational Novelties!

Johnson Smith & Co., Detroit, Mich.

Name

Address

Mail The Coupon

Mounted Police Suit

Test Your Voice!!

Make Records of Singing, Etc.

Have Fun Recording & Playing Your Own Music

$3.98

JUJITSU

BROADCAST TALK SING · PLAY

World Mike

DeLUXE MIKE

Price Only 25¢

Blank Cartridge Pistol 50c

THROW YOUR VOICE 10c

THE VENTRILO

POCKET RADIO

FIELD GLASSES 25c

RADIO

Live Chameleon

Marriage License 10c

CASH REGISTER

Foreign LICENSE PLATES

G-094

A-205

ELECTRIC MOTOR

Mystic Stamp Outfit

CRYSTAL RADIO 25c

Mysterious Running Mouse

Telegraph Set 15c

LUMINOUS PAINT

Winter Specials!

SPEEDY "STEAM" BOAT

Popular Rings

SCHOOL OR DESK ADDING MACHINE

Adds Up To 1,000 With Positive Accuracy

TELEPHONES 10c PAIR

Learn ART OF DANCING

HULA SKIRT

Pistol Cigarette Case 25c

POPULAR BOOKS

Boy Electrician

Midget Bible

Love Letters

Toy Maker

Shorthand

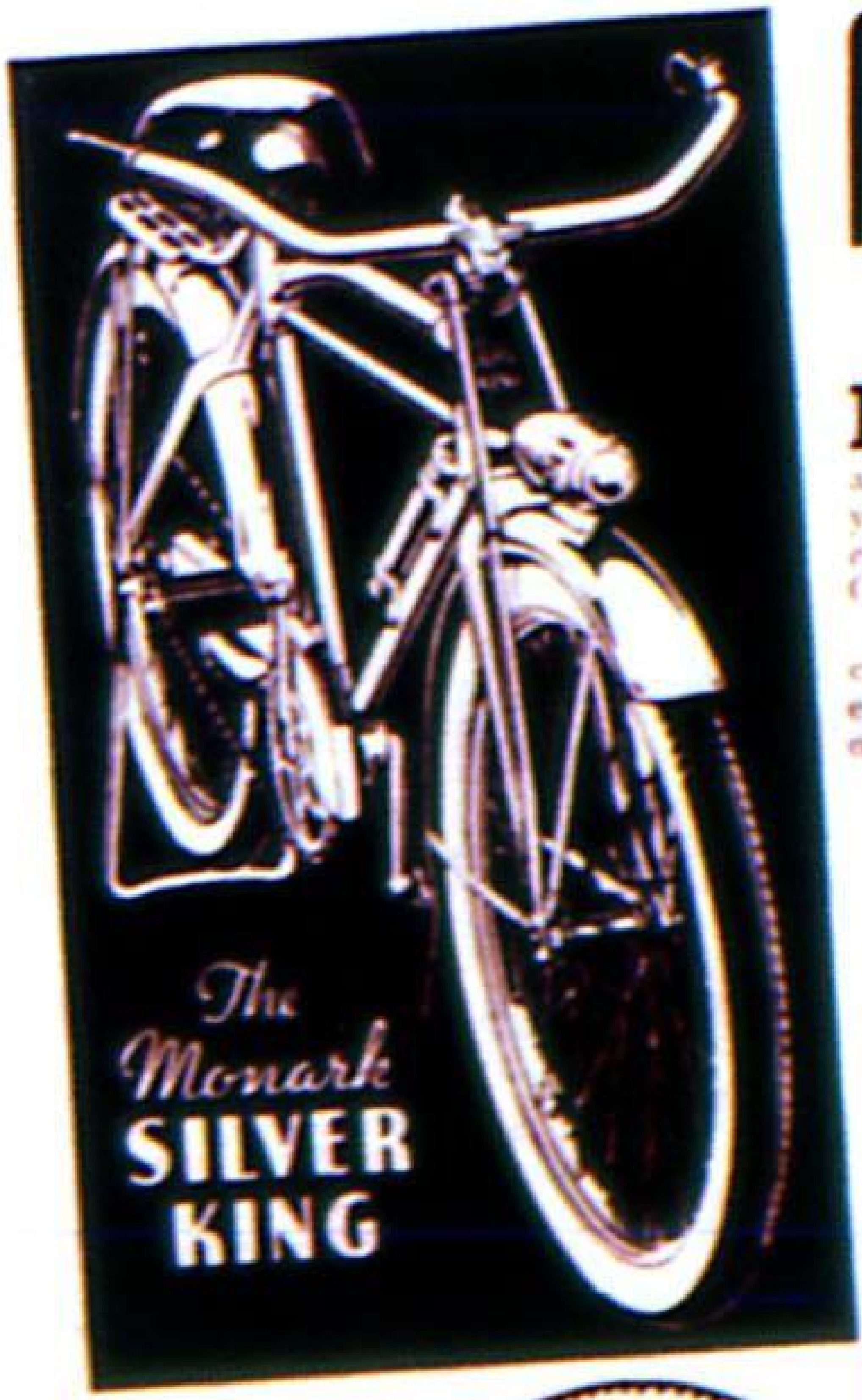
Jiu Jitsu

Hypnotism

Fortune Teller

Johnson Smith & Co. Dept. 520 Detroit, Mich.

RUSH Coupon for MAMMOTH CATALOG



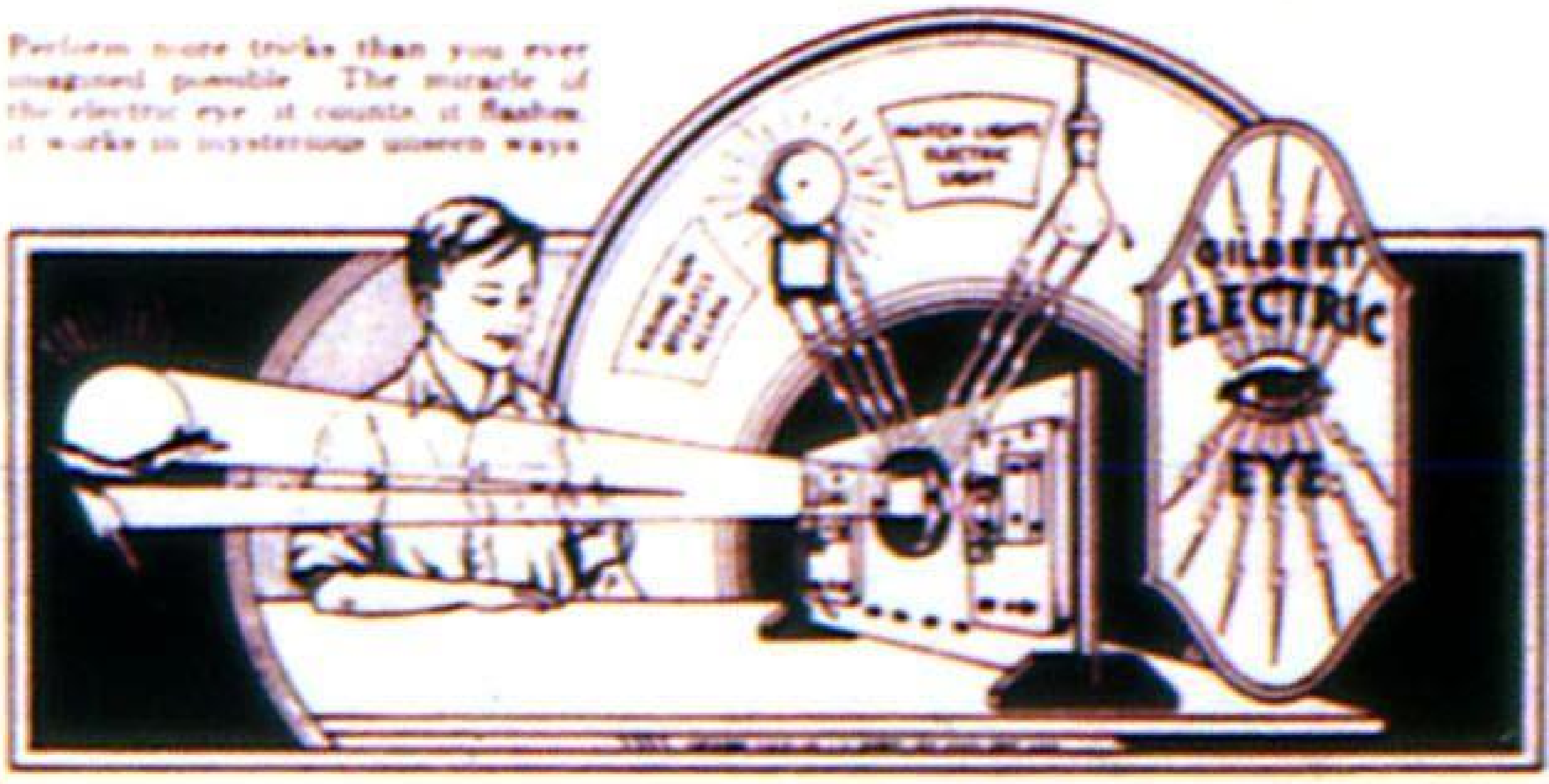
MONEY AND *Big* PRIZES

Mail the Coupon to Get Started at Once

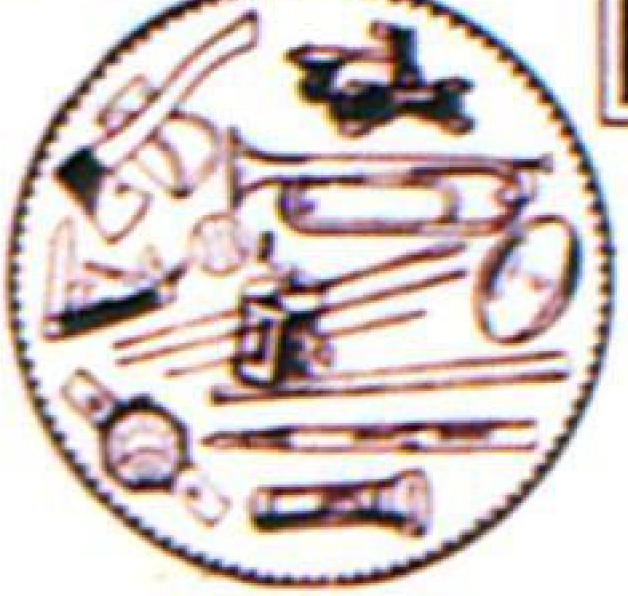
BOYS. Here's the chance of your young life. Leap on the cushion-soft saddle of this gleaming silvery bike. Notice its modern streamlining, the deluxe accessories. As you press gently on the pedals the zooming get-away will amaze you. Then you'll be flashing down the street on one of the lowest, speediest, classiest bikes you've ever laid eyes on, your breath caught in your Adam's apple! Claim this beauty, and any of 300 other big prizes. MAKE MONEY, besides.

It's easy! To earn the prizes you want, just deliver our popular magazines to customers you obtain in your own neighborhood. Save the "coupons" issued for every sale. And bank your cash profits. Get in on the fun NOW. Start a business of your own. You can do it in spare time. Mail the coupon today—and you'll be off!

Perform more tricks than you ever imagined possible. The miracle of the electric eye: it counts, it flashes, it works in mysterious unseen ways.

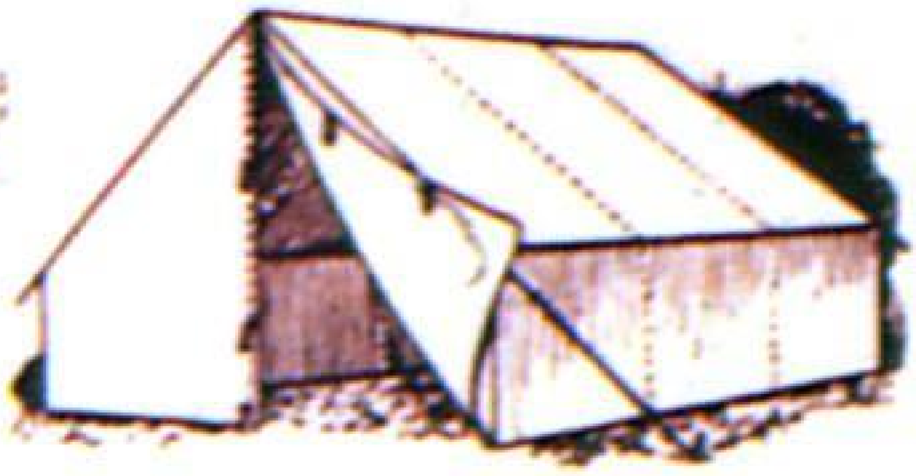


Over 300 prizes for you to earn! Imagine it! Almost anything you want—from a marble to a bicycle. These include your own clothing, shoes, musical instruments, typewriters, a movie machine, printing press, gold watches, candid cameras, athletic and Boy Scout equipment. Start today toward earning what you want. You'll make cash profits every week.

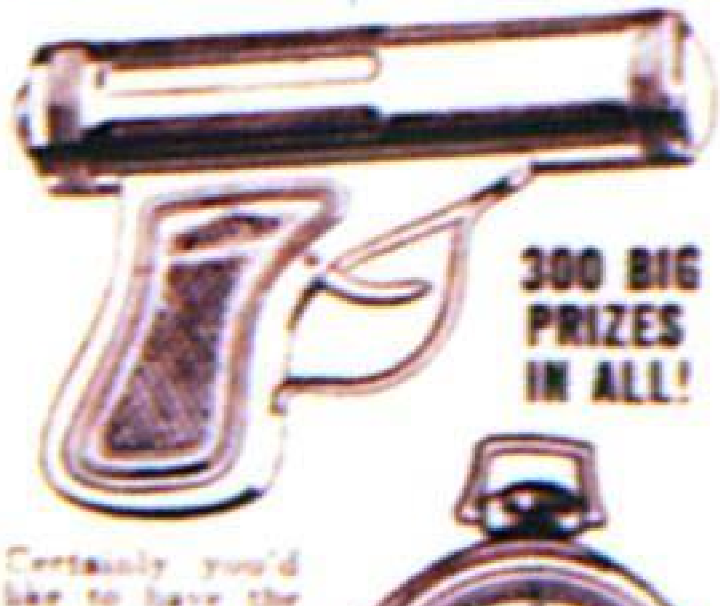


CAMPING SUPPLIES

Want a tent that will keep you dry as toast in a cloudburst? Here's one of the sturdiest made. Plenty of room for two. Easily carried, easy to put up. Earn it, and such other outdoor supplies as rods, reels, hunting knives, scout axes, sabers, sport belts. Get started at once. Mail the coupon.

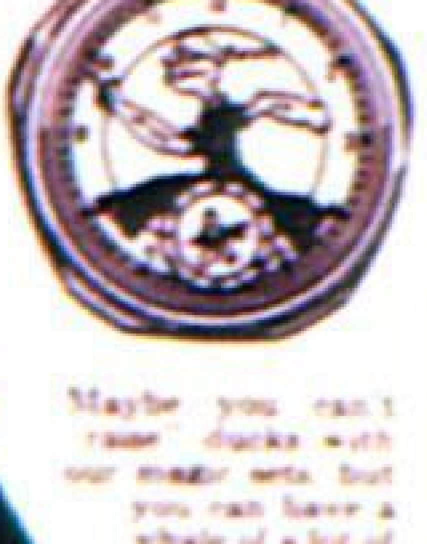


MAIL THE COUPON

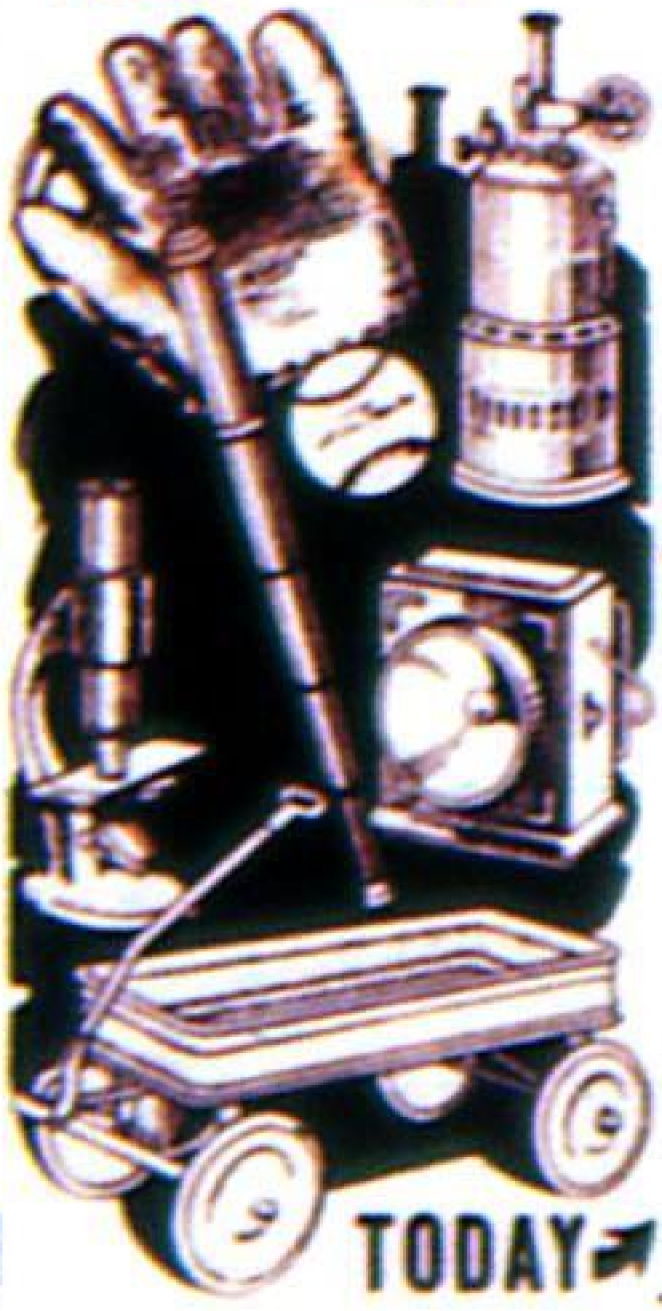


300 BIG PRIZES IN ALL!

Certainly you'd like to have the pistol flashlight shown above and the genuine Popeye watch at the right. The cream of prizes for you!



Maybe you can't "raise" ducks with our magic sets, but you can have a whale of a lot of good clean fun. Amaze your friends. Make money at it.



You Don't Have to Buy These Prizes

The beauty of our offer is this. You don't have to buy your prizes. You claim them by saving "coupons" which you receive for selling our magazines, and, of course, you make cash profits in addition! MONEY and PRIZES can be yours—starting NOW. Mail the coupon printed below—and we'll start you. We'll make it so easy for you to start that you can earn your first prize in a few hours! Don't delay a second. Zoom the coupon to us TODAY.

Mr. Jim Thayer, Dept. 943
The Crowell-Collier Publishing Co.
Springfield, Ohio

MAIL COUPON TODAY

Dear Jim: Yes sir! I want to make MONEY and earn PRIZES. Start me, and be quick about it. I'm out to pull down my first prize in a jiffy.

Name .... Age ....

Address ....

City .... State ....

MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY